

The long game

Patience and resolve needed on Ukraine — PHILIP STEPHENS, PAGE 13

Candidate of change

Gen. Buhari's challenge in Nigeria's tense elections — BIG READ, PAGE 11

Tall tales

Robert Shrimpley on the curse of misremembering — PAGE 12

Central banks take extreme action to stave off deflation

Swedish Riksbank makes first move to set negative main policy interest rate

CHRIS GILES — LONDON
RICHARD MILNE — OSLO

Central banks are resorting to ever more radical means to prevent deflation strengthening its grip over European economies, with Sweden's Riksbank yesterday becoming the first to set a negative main policy interest rate.

Many monetary policy authorities have set negative deposit rates for banks in recent years, including the European Central Bank, Swiss National Bank and Nordic central banks, but the Swedish move was a first on the main repo rate paid to the banking system.

The Riksbank cut the rate 10 basis points to minus 0.1 per cent and said it would buy SKr10bn (\$1.2bn) in government bonds in its own form of quantitative easing.

The Bank of England also decided yesterday to end the effective 0.5 per cent floor for its main interest rate, in a signal that if deflationary forces caught hold in the UK it, too, would be willing to contemplate negative interest rates.

While European central banks stress that their economies remain far from a situation of persistent deflation, the moves by the BoE and Riksbank show their determination never to fall into the kind of debt-and-deflation trap suffered by Japan over the past couple of decades.

"We are far from the lower bound," said Stefan Ingves, Riksbank governor. The Riksbank said a study of the effects of the current rate reduction would influence how far it thought it could cut

amid worries from some economists that the public could hoard cash if rates became too negative.

Gary Jenkins, chief credit strategist at hedge fund LNG Capital, said central banks were pushing each other to take further action: "It is a general theme that everybody is cutting interest rates in a tremendous race to the bottom."

Headline inflation in Sweden has been negative for much of the past two years and although the Riksbank said there were signs of it bottoming out it is worried about the impact on inflation expectations, especially ahead of upcoming wage negotiations.

The BoE's announcement that it had additional weapons to fight deflation and low wage increases came as it said inflation was likely to fall below zero in the coming months, although that should not be confused with persistent deflation.

Mark Carney, BoE governor, said that the most likely next move in interest rates was still higher, but that the central bank wanted to reassure people it had plenty of ammunition if the economy faltered in the months ahead.

"The important point, which is entirely from a contingency or risk-management perspective, is to underscore that if we were in a situation . . . where we needed to provide additional stimulus, we have many options," he said.

Carney on deflation page 2

Leap into unknown page 6

Editorial Comment page 12

Breathing space ECB extends Greek loans by €5bn to shore up lenders



On edge: Greek prime minister Alexis Tsipras with France's President François Hollande at an EU leaders' summit in Brussels yesterday — Yves Herman/Reuters

CLAIRE JONES — FRANKFURT
KERIN HOPE — ATHENS

The European Central Bank has extended another €5bn in emergency loans to banks in Greece, following fears that a spate of withdrawals could leave lenders in the country short of funding.

The ECB decision, made after a call with members of its governing council yesterday, came as Greek prime minister Alexis Tsipras took his case for a new financial rescue deal to an EU summit in Brussels.

The move is a sign of mounting strains on Greece's finances as prolonged brinkmanship

between Athens and the eurozone over its bailout threatens to leave the country with no financial support in just over two weeks. The two sides failed to establish any common ground at a meeting of finance ministers on Wednesday night.

The request for more leeway for Greek lenders was first made last week by Greece's central bank but was refused, suggesting that the ECB is trying to keep a tight rein on Greece.

Withdrawals from Greek banks have been steady at €200m–€300m a day, according to a senior Athens banker, but are expected to jump if a eurozone finance ministers

meeting on Monday ends badly. The ECB move takes the total amount of funding available to Greek banks through emergency loans, known as Emergency Liquidity Assistance, to about €65bn.

The Greek government said yesterday that tax revenues were 20.3 per cent below target, a shortfall of €935m, heightening concerns that the country would not meet €4.1bn of debt repayments due in the next six weeks unless it accepts an extension of its bailout at the end of the month.

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Lex page 16

Ralph Atkins page 32

Briefing

► **Wary response to Ukraine peace deal**
European leaders reacted warily to the 13-point peace deal for Ukraine after bruising all-night talks in Minsk. Some warned that Russia's President Vladimir Putin appeared to have come out on top, but German Chancellor Angela Merkel said it "gives us great hope". — PAGE 7; PHILIP STEPHENS, PAGE 13

► **Shire tax boon on AbbVie 'break fee'**
Shire has been advised that the \$1.6bn "break fee" received from AbbVie after the collapse of their abortive merger is not taxable, exposing the Dublin-based, UK-listed drugmaker to fresh scrutiny of its tax affairs. — PAGE 17; LOMBARD, PAGE 22

► **Rio Tinto unveils \$2bn share buyback**
Rio Tinto defied the gloom in the commodities sector as chief executive Sam Walsh announced a rise in the group's dividend and a \$2bn share buyback. — PAGE 17; LOMBARD, PAGE 22



► **Labour in bonus clawback plan**
Bankers found guilty of wrongdoing could see their bonuses and fixed pay clawed back even if the offence took place 10 years ago, under a package of reforms to be announced by Labour today. — PAGE 2

► **Obama eyes Silicon Valley cyber support**
US President Barack Obama will today seek to enlist Silicon Valley's support for his post-Snowden push for cyber security legislation. — PAGE 8

► **Total to cut refinery jobs**
Total is to cut 180 jobs at the Lindsey refinery and shake up its lossmaking French sites, as it accelerates plans to shed billions of dollars of assets after crude oil's plunge. — PAGE 21

► **Fidelity posts record profits for 2014**
In its first annual results with Abigail Johnson as CEO, asset manager Fidelity Investments reported record profits for 2014, despite net outflows of \$6bn and lost market share. — PAGE 20

Datawatch

Email on the go



About 80 per cent of email opened on mobile devices is done using an Apple OS, while only one in five use Android. The rates are strikingly similar among G10 countries



'Nut rage' Korean Air executive has to eat humble pie after receiving jail term

SIMON MUNDY — SEOUL

Cho Hyun-ah, the Korean Air executive who lost her temper over a bag of macadamia nuts, is set to spend the next year eating prison food after she was found guilty in a Seoul court of violating aviation safety rules.

Cho, then head of in-flight services and the daughter of the airline's chairman, ordered a Korean Air flight to abandon take-off and return to the terminal at New York's John F Kennedy airport after becoming enraged with a steward for serving her nuts in a bag, rather than on a plate.

Judge Oh Seong-woo said Cho had "trampled on . . . human dignity" through her aggressive behaviour towards staff during the incident in December, and had treated the airliner like a "private plane".

The episode provoked outrage and debate in South Korea, where it was seen as emblematic of the power and sense of impunity that some perceive among the families that control the country's dominant chaebol business groups.

"This is an extreme case, but every day . . . there's a similar thing taking place," said Chang Sea-jin, a professor at KAIST College of Business. "The problem is the mindset of the founding families — their power is almost absolute."

Some people in South Korea's business community are concerned that Cho has been treated harshly to appease public anger and to set an example for other corporate leaders. The incident has brought much negative publicity for Korean Air, which has won plaudits for its level of service despite a series of annual losses. At the World Travel Awards, Korean Air's first-class offer-

ing, overseen by Cho, has been named Asia's best for the last five years.

Cho's lawyer argued that she had not interfered with the flight plan because the jet had not taken off when she intervened. But the judge dismissed the argument, pointing to international conventions that rule a flight begins when the aircraft's engine has started.

The judge imposed the minimum sentence of 12 months, noting that she had two young children and had expressed regret for her actions. Concerns that company officials may feel obliged to protect the interests of controlling chaebol families will be bolstered by the eight-month prison sentence given yesterday to Yeo Woon-jin, Korean Air's head of cabin training, for interfering with the transport ministry investigation into Cho.

Additional reporting by Jennifer Thompson

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ALWAYS LEARNING

World Markets

STOCK MARKETS			
Feb 12	prev	%chg	
S&P 500	2088.40	2068.53	0.96
Nasdaq Composite	4857.61	4801.18	1.18
Dow Jones Ind	17972.38	17862.14	0.62
FTSE Eurofirst 300	1493.22	1483.69	0.64
Euro Stoxx 50	3417.61	3374.14	1.29
FTSE 100	6828.11	6818.17	0.15
FTSE All-Share	3674.58	3664.00	0.29
CAC 40	4726.20	4679.38	1.00
Xetra Dax	10919.65	10752.11	1.56
Nikkei	17979.72	17652.68	1.85
Hang Seng	24422.15	24315.02	0.44
FTSE All World \$	279.91	276.76	1.14

CURRENCIES					
Feb 12	prev		Feb 12	prev	
\$ per €	1.137	1.131	€ per \$	0.879	0.895
£ per €	1.537	1.527	£ per \$	0.651	0.655
€ per £	0.740	0.741	€ per £	1.351	1.350
¥ per \$	118,990	120,380	¥ per €	135,322	136,084
¥ per £	182,845	183,772	¥ index	90,091	89,836
€ index	87,222	87,132	£ index	101,895	101,257
SFr per €	1.056	1.047	SFr per £	1.427	1.414

INTEREST RATES			
	price	yield	chg
US Gov 10 yr	102.47	1.97	-0.05
UK Gov 10 yr	109.58	1.67	-0.01
Ger Gov 10 yr	101.79	0.32	-0.04
Jpn Gov 10 yr	99.15	0.39	0.00
US Gov 30 yr	109.43	2.55	-0.04
Ger Gov 2 yr	100.62	-0.21	0.00
Fed Funds Eff	0.12	0.11	0.01
US 3m Bills	0.01	0.01	0.00
Euro Libor 3m	0.03	0	

NATIONAL

Talk of Brexit no longer taboo in EU but fears grow over 'ugly' break-up

If Britain goes Once steadfast allies are positioning to survive in a bloc without the UK

ALEX BARKER — BRUSSELS

When General Charles de Gaulle blocked Britain's bid to join the European Community, France's president impishly evoked an Edith Piaf song with the words "Ne pleurez pas, Milord" ("Don't cry, my lord").

More than half a century on, if Britain were to vote in a referendum to quit the EU club there would probably be tears aplenty in Berlin, Warsaw, Amsterdam, Rome and beyond — even perhaps from some proud Gaullists.

For on top of the acrimony and wasted energy of a drawn-out divorce, the UK's departure alarms many European leaders because it would disrupt the bloc's inner workings, its balance of power, its international standing, its policy orientation and sense of purpose.

More than just a rupture with Britain, it would be a jolt to the bloc's political order — one that Jan Techau of the Carnegie Europe think-tank expects would be of the same historical importance as the enlargement policy that transformed Europe in the wake of the cold war. "It would be momentous," he said.

For the pro-EU establishment in Europe, the political shock would raise frightening questions. Would it be a fillip to populists and beat a path for other national exits? Would it open a more dirigiste, statist economic policy era? Or another step towards German ascendancy? Meanwhile, for anti-EU insurgents it will be the test of whether it is possible to achieve prosperity and freedom outside the EU club.

"There is an underlying geopolitical equilibrium to the union which would be completely upset. This won't just change rules and treaties but relationships — Brexit will change the very nature of the union," said Luuk van Mid-

'It is easy to fall in love and more difficult to stay together'

Jean-Claude Juncker

de laar, a Dutch political philosopher and former speech writer to Herman Van Rompuy, the first European Council president. "The Dutch and Belgians worked hard for almost 15 years to get Britain to join in 1973. It feels safer in a club with three big guys around rather than just two."

Most countries see the EU as a diminished place without Britain. But there are mixed feelings, not least in France. Impatience with British exceptionalism is growing across the board. Angela Merkel of Germany is telling David Cameron not to make her choose between Britain and the interests of the eurozone. Even once steadfast allies — in Poland, Sweden and the Netherlands — are positioning to survive in an EU without Britain, in case it does happen.

EU officials openly discuss the once taboo possibility of Brexit, sometimes with a hint of insouciance. Jean-Claude Juncker, the European Commission president, compared it to a romance on the rocks, saying it is "easy to fall in love and more difficult to stay together".

Yet officials are acutely aware that if Britain does decide to go, the break-up will be a fraught, painful haggle lasting



That was then: Gertrude Shilling wears a Common Market outfit to Royal Ascot in 1973. The costume was designed by her milliner son David to celebrate Britain's joining the European Community earlier that year — Hulton Archive

Personal finance

Retail investors anxious but holidaymakers set fair

If Britain leaves the EU, the effects would be particularly felt by some parts of the UK population.

Britons living abroad

The government estimates that about 1.8m Britons live in other EU countries, more than half of them in Spain. Over 400,000 receive the UK state pension.

If movement and residency rules change, one option for Britons who want to live in an EU state might be an investment visa.

These are offered by Spain and Portugal among others, and give residency to someone who invests in property or business.

Holiday homeowners

Brexit would not have an obvious impact on property rights and tax, which are determined at a national level.

But, said Richard Way, editor of the Overseas Guides Company, "there's little doubt that being an EU national brings with it a certain level of protection when owning a property in another EU country".

Holidaymakers

Pulling out of the single market would be more of an inconvenience than a serious problem.

The UK is not a member of the Schengen visa-free area and the European Health Insurance Card, which gives tourists access to state healthcare in participating countries, is an initiative of the European Economic Area rather than the EU.

Flight compensation is currently paid for delayed departures from EU airports. If the UK left the bloc, airlines would no longer be bound by this legislation.

Retail investors

Much of Britain's financial regulation relating to individual investors comes from Brussels, so withdrawal could have a big impact. For example, forthcoming EU rules may limit retail investor access to investment trusts, a product that has a long UK record but is little-known elsewhere in Europe.

On the other hand, Brussels lawmakers have also voted to force fund companies and wealth managers to disclose more information on their fees.

Students

EU students can apply to study at any university in the bloc and pay the same fees as nationals. Non-EU students often face much higher charges.

The UK could also pull out of the Erasmus academic exchange scheme while a post-Brexit deal is negotiated, says Universities UK, the sector's umbrella body.

Adam Palin and Judith Evans

for several years. "Some people seem to think there would be a nice divorce, that everyone will calm down and focus on the children. That is unlikely," said Gordon Bajnai, Hungary's former premier. "It will be ugly. It is in nobody's interest to offer Britain a good deal — you can't take the best out of Europe if you don't share." Those setting the divorce terms will also worry about inspiring eurosceptics within the union. If Britain secures favourable arrangements and flourishes, the EU project could be shown to be reversible, and its benefits open to cherry-picking. "A British exit could prompt other countries to try to defect, it could be the catalyst for a bigger catastrophe for the EU," said Mr Bajnai. "There will be many unintended consequences."

On economic policy, the loss of British influence would be sorely felt by northern, liberal allies. "You lose a pro competition, free market, free trade, a genuine western capitalist power and one of the strongest. You lose a voice for one of the centrepieces of EU integration," said Mr Techau. "The EU is a lot like Britain wants it to be on economic policy. Angela Merkel does not want to be left alone with France when it comes to these issues."

What would Brexit mean in practice? Much rides on the course of the current crisis and whether the eurozone holds together. Assuming no fundamental change by 2017, some federalists believe Britain's exit could accelerate integration, pushing countries towards a more unified, sharply differentiated eurozone.

Others are more sceptical of the idea that Britain is holding others back. "Brexit would mean Britain and the EU would be obliged to face their own problems, without the scapegoat of each other," said Alain Lamassoure, a centrist MEP and former French Europe minister.

"It is very convenient in Paris and Berlin to put the blame for their inaction on London."

Europe's common defence and security policy would also lose one of its most capable and active world powers. Especially given the chill in EU-Russia relations, some analysts think it would highlight the Franco-German imbalance in defence spending, forcing Berlin to consider a more assertive role.

A lot depends on which UK-EU model is chosen. Boris Johnson, London's mayor, has championed the idea of "Britishland" — the UK and Switzerland, later joined by the likes of Sweden and Norway, forming a free trade area.

Mr Lamassoure draws a parallel between Brexit and France withdrawing its forces from Nato structures in the 1960s, while remaining a treaty member. "At least even bad decisions can be reversed. The French realised they had all the drawbacks without the advantages of full membership," he said, regarding the decision to rejoin in 2009. "I hope it doesn't take the Brits half a century to reach the same conclusion."

 Slideshow and previous articles in this series on the impact of a Brexit ft.com/brexit

Labour reforms

Bankers face extension of pay clawbacks to 10 years

GEORGE PARKER — POLITICAL EDITOR

Bankers found guilty of wrongdoing could see their bonuses and fixed pay clawed back even if the offence took place 10 years ago, under a package of reforms to be announced by Labour today.

Ed Balls, shadow chancellor, will say that the proposed clawback period should be extended from seven to 10 years to take account of the fact that some banking scandals take a long time to emerge.

Referring to the tax evasion scandal at HSBC's Swiss private bank from 2005 to 2007, Mr Balls will say: "As we have seen in recent days, wrongdoing can take years to uncover."

"The current proposals to claw back bonuses are too weak and do not cover a long enough period of time. We will ensure that people involved in misbehaviour would have to give back their bonuses for at least a decade after they have been paid out."

Mr Balls also endorsed a proposal by Mark Carney, Bank of England governor, that the clawback mechanism should also be applied to fixed pay, now that bonuses are subject to an EU cap.

The shadow chancellor will also promise that a Labour government would require a bank to publish the number of its employees earning more than £1m.

Meanwhile, Mr Balls will restate Labour's desire to see two new challenger banks on the high street and a market share test to ensure the market remains competitive in the long term. The sector is the subject of a Competition and Markets Authority inquiry and there has been tension between Mr Balls and party leader Ed Miliband over exactly how Labour should respond to the CMA's final report.

In January 2014, Mr Miliband in effect overrode the CMA's independence by announcing he wanted the regulator to come up with ways to force big banks to divest themselves of hundreds of branches.

Mr Balls believes the CMA should be allowed to exercise its own judgment, but aides say the regulator's report would be guided by the fact that "we want two challenger banks".

Asked how Labour would respond if the CMA failed to deliver a report that was acceptable to Mr Miliband, Mr Balls's spokesman said: "Let's wait and see what they say."

A third element to Labour's banking plan is the creation of a British Investment Bank to provide funding for small and medium-sized companies.

All funds raised from the planned increase in the licence fees for the mobile phone spectrum — which Labour says could be worth £1bn in the next parliament, subject to Ofcom consultation — would be allocated to the bank.

While Mr Miliband has been highly critical of the culture in Britain's financial services sector, Mr Balls tends to speak more warmly of the role banks play in the economy.

Mr Balls, a former City minister, and Chuka Umunna, shadow business secretary, have been active in recent months in trying to build relations between Labour and the City.

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Populus poll

SNP predicted to have 42% chance of joining next government

JIM PICKARD — CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

The Scottish National party has a 42 per cent chance of taking part in the next UK government, according to the latest general election predictions from the opinion poll firm, Populus.

The SNP is on track to win 48 seats on May 7, judging by the latest polls. This will multiply its numbers eight times on the green benches of the Commons from its current strength of six.

Populus has worked with Hanover, a public relations firm, to create an "outcome predictor" combining national polling data with constituency-level polls — using statistical modelling to produce probability scores for the most likely result in May.

Their latest model gives the SNP a 42 per cent chance of taking part in the next government, based on current poll ratings. The most likely option would be in combination with Labour — a 26 per cent likelihood — or with Labour and the Lib Dems — 10 per cent.

The Scottish nationalists have ruled out any kind of deal with the Tories but are open to an informal "confidence and

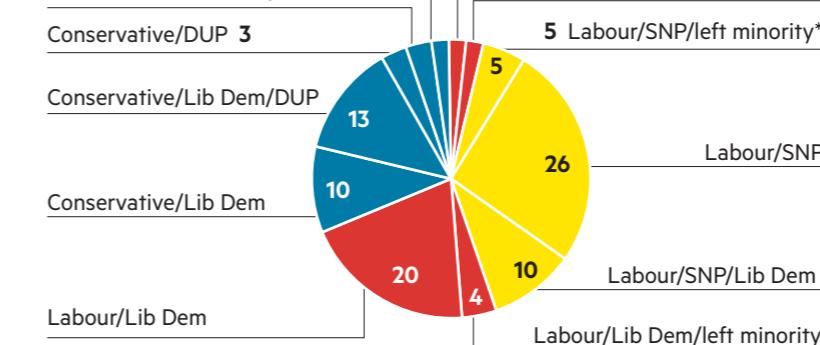
supply" arrangement with Labour where the party would support a Miliband government but have no ministers in London.

Any such deal would be tense, given the antipathy between Labour and the SNP in Scotland. Most of the SNP gains in the general election would be at the expense of Labour, and to a lesser extent the Lib Dems, making subsequent co-operation difficult.

Scotland's first minister believes that London could increase spending in real terms by 0.5 per cent a year — equivalent to £180bn by 2020 — and still reduce the UK's borrowing.

Slowing down the austerity pro-

Projected election outcomes Likelihood of each coalition scenario (%)



Source: Populus/Hanover * Green, Plaid Cymru, SDLP

gramme would be popular "not just with SNP supporters, but I'm sure a lot of traditional Labour supporters in Scotland and across the rest of the UK as well", she argued.

This week's Populus/Hanover Predictor also suggests a two-thirds chance that there will be 100 or more MPs from outside the Labour and Tory parties for the first time in more than 90 years.

Rick Nye, managing director of Populus, said: "In a week when some of the minor parties have been naming their price for entering a coalition, the Populus/Hanover Predictor shows a two-thirds chance that there will be 100 or more non-Labour and non-Conservative MPs in parliament after the general election for the first time in more than 90 years.

"Despite the Liberal Democrats being projected to lose half the 56 seats they hold, the SNP surge in Scotland, where they are on course to win more than 45 seats, added to the nine projected Ukip, Green and Plaid Cymru MPs and to Northern Ireland's 18 MPs, takes the non-major party total to over 100 seats on the Predictor's central projection," he added.

NATIONAL

Party funding

Fink and Labour try to defuse tax-dodge row

Tory donor admits 'vanilla' measures as opposition softens language about peer

GEORGE PARKER AND HELEN WARRELL

Lord Fink, the former Conservative treasurer and hedge fund chief, has backed away from a threat to sue Ed Miliband, admitting he had taken "vanilla" tax avoidance measures and claiming that everybody did the same.

Amid signs the Tories were keen to end the row between one of their biggest donors and the Labour leader, Lord Fink, former head of the Man Group, said yesterday: "The expression 'tax avoidance' is so wide that everyone does tax avoidance at some level."

Mr Miliband told parliament on

Wednesday that David Cameron was "a dodgy prime minister surrounded by dodgy donors" and challenged Mr Cameron to say "what steps he is going to take about the tax avoidance activities of Lord Fink".

But Labour insisted Mr Miliband was not suggesting that Lord Fink, who has given the Conservatives almost £3m, was himself "dodgy", amid signs that both sides were trying to stop the row from escalating. The Labour leader said he stood by his claim that Lord Fink was involved in tax avoidance — a legal activity — and suggested it was wrong to try to minimise a tax bill.

"David Cameron has to explain why he appointed a treasurer of the Conservative party who boasts about tax avoidance and thinks it's something everyone does," Mr Miliband told an audience

at his old school in north London.

Mr Miliband's team feared the confrontation was distracting attention from the Labour leader's speech on schools policy, which includes a promise to ringfence the education budget in real terms in the next parliament.

The Conservatives also wanted to end the row, conscious that a confrontation between Mr Miliband and a wealthy hedge fund chief and Tory donor was not generating positive headlines.

"It's a bad story," said one Tory minister. "You can imagine Lynton Crosby [the Conservative election campaign chief] saying: 'Get this story off the front page now.'" A Tory MP said: "This is bad for us because it reinforces the perception that we only look out for the rich."

Tory officials said Mr Miliband had performed a "massive climbdown" yes-

terday by failing to accuse Lord Fink in public of being "dodgy" or of using his HSBC Swiss bank account for tax avoidance purposes.

But Lord Fink tried to defuse the row. "I don't even want to sue Ed Miliband," he told the Evening Standard. "In my life I have been libelled a few dozen times and I have never sued anybody, even for some comments that were quite outrageous."

"If he simply uses the words 'Lord Fink did ordinary tax avoidance' then no, I couldn't sue him. But if he made the statement 'dodgy' about my bank account, that was potentially libellous. That was the issue I took exception to."

"I also took exception to him saying I had questions to answer. In fact, whenever anyone has put questions to me I have answered them."



49%
Share of voters
who thought
Ed Miliband's
confrontation with
business figures
shows the Labour
leader, above, is
on the side of
ordinary people

27%
Share who thought
it shows he is
a danger to
the economy

Lord Fink told the Standard his tax planning was at the "vanilla" or "mild" end of the spectrum, including transferring shares into family trusts while in Switzerland. He stressed that he rejected expert advice that he could save a fortune in tax by adopting more "aggressive" measures.

A ComRes/ITV News poll has found Mr Miliband's confrontation with some business leaders and hedge fund bosses divided opinion among voters: 49 per cent said it showed he was on the side of ordinary people, and 27 per cent said it showed he was a danger to the economy.

The Conservatives remain the party most trusted to promote economic growth (36 per cent versus 24 per cent for Labour), while Mr Miliband's party had a lead on consumer issues and on a willingness "to stand up to big business".

Profile. Lord Fink

Hedge fund 'godfather' reluctantly drawn into dogfight

The grammar school-educated Mancunian peer is fiercely proud of his reputation

MILES JOHNSON

As he sat down to a curry lunch near the House of Commons on Wednesday, Stanley Fink, the Conservative peer, was digesting some unpalatable news.

The former Conservative party treasurer and multimillionaire, dubbed the "godfather" of the British hedge fund industry for his time as boss of Man Group, had minutes earlier been mentioned by Labour leader Ed Miliband in a speech that criticised "dodgy donors" who held accounts at HSBC's Swiss private bank.

Lord Fink, who had opened an account at HSBC when he was posted to Switzerland by Man Group in the late 1990s, was furious at having been thrown into the spotlight as Labour tried to link senior Conservative party figures to alleged tax avoidance.

The Tory peer believes that his Swiss account was no different to the accounts he held in other countries where he owns property, such as France and Spain. He uses these accounts to pay his daily bills.

A quietly spoken Mancunian, Lord Fink's background as a grammar school-educated son of a grocer does not comfortably fit into the world of silver-spooned privilege that has been associated with David Cameron's party.

The peer initially reacted to being named in parliament in a robust fashion. In an open letter to Mr Miliband, who had spoken inside parliament and was thus protected from a defamation suit, Lord Fink challenged the Labour leader to repeat his allegations outside the Commons, with the implication that legal action would follow.

Mr Fink, who has been estimated by the Sunday Times Rich List to be worth more than £100m, said later yesterday he employed what he dubbed "vanilla" tax avoidance through his activities in Switzerland, having set up family trusts to transfer shares to his children, and retracted his threat to sue Mr Miliband.

For a man who has always been fiercely proud of his reputation — and about whom few have a bad word to say, according to his friends — the prospect of having his financial affairs splashed across newspaper pages before a general election was galling.



Quietly spoken: Lord Fink, former Tory party treasurer, has of late avoided the glare of the political spotlight, preferring to run his ISAM hedge fund — eyevine

HSBC Treasury committee to scrutinise scandal-hit bank

Watchdogs and politicians are lining up to scrutinise HSBC following criticism that the tax authority's response to the avoidance and evasion scandal has been "pathetic".

Douglas Flint, the bank's chairman, and Lin Homer, head of HM Revenue & Customs, have been called to give evidence to the Treasury select committee. The Revenue was given a leaked dossier of account holders at the Swiss private banking subsidiary in 2010.

Mr Flint has been executive chairman at HSBC since the end of 2010, taking responsibility for regulation and compliance. Before that he was finance

director for about 15 years. HSBC has admitted that, during that time, some clients of its Swiss subsidiary were involved in tax-dodging activities with help from the bank.

Andrew Tyrie, who chairs the committee, has decided against calling previous HSBC executives, such as Lord Green, who was chief executive of the bank from 2003 to 2006 and chairman from 2006 to 2010. "The committee doesn't want to drag up the past, so it will focus on HSBC now and how it has dealt with this problem and ensured that it doesn't happen again," said a spokesman for Mr Tyrie. The hearing is provisionally set for February 25.

HSBC says it "has implemented numerous initiatives designed to prevent its banking services being used to evade taxes or launder money".

Ms Homer appeared before MPs on Wednesday. In a bruising hearing, they accused the Revenue of being slow to take action against the bank. The Revenue's head of enforcement said she wanted to collaborate with other agencies. The Serious Fraud Office said yesterday it was ready to co-operate with the Revenue, although no formal SFO investigation has been launched.

The SFO has both criminal investigators and prosecutors, while criminal cases investigated by the Revenue are passed to the Crown Prosecution Service. But legal experts questioned what the SFO could do that the Revenue could not: one person close to both agencies pointed out that the Revenue has more powers of criminal asset recovery than the SFO.

The SFO has taken on some high-

profile cases in recent months, such as a probe of Tesco, which is also subject to an investigation by the Financial Conduct Authority. "This smacks of tokenism. [HMRC] and the CPS have all the powers they need in the criminal arena," said Jonathan Fisher QC, who specialises in financial crime cases. "But this has become very political."

The tax scandal is the latest problem for the bank, which has been in the sights of prosecutors around the world. In 2012, it paid \$19bn to settle claims it laundered money for countries under US sanctions and for Latin American drug cartels, and last year paid \$618m over allegations its traders attempted to manipulate foreign-exchange benchmarks. US authorities are still investigating forex manipulation.

Caroline Binham and Martin Arnold

Lord Ashcroft, the millionaire Conservative party peer, took to Twitter to defend Lord Fink, writing: "As avoidance is legal, Miliband must be looking for tips . . ." Other allies pointed to the large amounts Lord Fink has donated to various charities, and to his extensive work for Jewish causes.

Labour's attack has come at an unwelcome time for a man who had taken less of a full-time role in British politics since stepping down as Conservative treasurer, preferring to run his ISAM hedge fund and go skiing with his family. ISAM was one of the world's best performing funds in 2014, after several poor years.

Stanley Fink won his "godfather" status in the British hedge fund industry from his two decades working at Man Group. He joined the company in 1987 after graduating from Cambridge and starting work as an accountant. At the time he joined, Man was largely an agricultural trading business which traced its roots to a Thames-side barrel maker started in 1783.

By the time he stepped down as chief executive in 2008, Mr Fink had helped transform Man into one of the world's largest hedge funds by assets. Its AHL

**'As avoidance is legal,
Miliband must be
looking for tips . . .'**

Lord Ashcroft, Conservatives

computer-driven commodities and futures fund was one of the leaders in its field.

Lord Fink was then appointed co-treasurer of the Conservative party, having been one of its largest donors. In this role, Mr Fink expanded his influence, building close ties with senior party figures and using his thick contact book of City figures to raise money for election campaigns.

Entering politics relatively late in life, Lord Fink was determined to make an impact and approached the task with the same energy he deployed when he took up skiing. Having had little experience of the slopes when younger, he now enjoys helicopter lifts up mountains in Italy to tackle challenging runs.

Since stepping down as Conservative treasurer Lord Fink has largely avoided the glare of the political spotlight. The question now is for how long the row over his tax affairs may distract him from his day-to-day ISAM hedge fund business.

Inflation report

Carney welcomes prospect of deflation as BoE considers cutting interest rates below 0.5%

CHRIS GILES — ECONOMICS EDITOR

A period of deflation owing to falling oil prices would be "unambiguously good" for the economy, the governor of the Bank of England said yesterday.

Mark Carney insisted that if prices fell in coming months, as expected, this would be good deflation as it would raise incomes and spending. He said there were no sign yet of bad deflation, deterring purchases as a result of persistent and generalised falls in prices.

Economists said the inflation report was relatively hawkish and represented a warning to investors not to bet heavily on interest rates staying at their current low of 0.5 per cent well into 2016.

Nevertheless, the BoE did concede that there was a possibility of a slide into persistent weak wage and price growth and changed its guidance on interest rates to provide greater firepower against weak demand. In future, it said,

it no longer saw 0.5 per cent as a floor for interest rates.

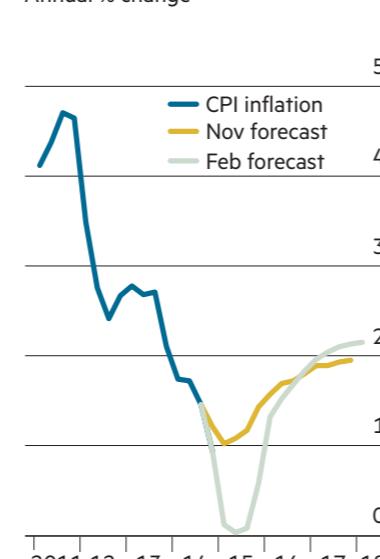
Mr Carney was more positive about the prospects for the economy than at any time since becoming governor in summer 2013. Predicting 2.9 per cent growth in 2015 and real household post tax incomes rising 3.5 per cent, the BoE expects consumer spending to continue rising quickly this year.

The only blot on the landscape was a reduction in the business investment forecast, which the governor said was entirely owing to weaker expectations of oil-related capital spending in the North Sea rather than a generalised loss of business confidence.

With rapid spending growth and declining unemployment, the Monetary Policy Committee now thinks slack in the economy — which can be used up without generating inflationary pressures — has fallen to roughly 0.5 per cent of gross domestic product. The lack of

BoE inflation forecasts

Annual % change



Market expectation of interest rate rise

Number of months to the first increase according to market pricing



slack and the fact that recent declines in petrol, food and energy prices will stop pulling inflation figures down towards the end of this year, has convinced the MPC that medium-term inflationary pressures are higher than in November.

If events turn out as predicted, Mr Carney was clear that rates would rise, but said any increases would be gradual and limited. "It's pretty clear in terms of our central expectation that the most likely next move in monetary policy is an increase in interest rates," he said.

Economists agreed that the inflation report was seeking to persuade investors not to bet on rates remaining low for a long time. Michael Saunders, of Citi, pointed out that it was the first time since 2009 the BoE had forecast above target inflation three years hence.

Vicky Redwood, of Capital Economics, said: "The stronger medium-term inflation forecast was a warning to financial markets that their expecta-

tions for the first rate hike were too far into the future."

Financial markets appeared to have received a warning, ahead of the inflation report, that the MPC thought interest rate rises needed to happen before late 2016. BoE statistics show sharp moves in interest rate futures last Friday, bringing market expectations into line with the new BoE forecasts.

Asked whether he was worried there might have been a leak of the report, Mr Carney said there was no cause for concern. "I have no reason to have those worries," he said, adding "there's always been adjustments in markets in terms of expectations of stance or policy".

In a change to previous guidance, the bank said it would now consider cutting interest rates below 0.5 per cent, something it had always refused to do in the past for fear of hitting banks' profitability and willingness to lend.

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Education budget

Miliband sums fail to add up, says think-tank

IFS argues Labour plans would still lead to a fall in sum spent on each child

HELEN WARRELL
— PUBLIC POLICY CORRESPONDENT

Warming up for his flagship education announcement yesterday, Ed Miliband admitted he felt a "faint whiff of trepidation" being back at his former north London comprehensive. "Have I remembered to do my maths homework?" he joked to the audience at Haverstock School. "I have, I promise."

But the Labour leader's calculations appeared to unravel after it emerged

that his central pledge — maintaining the entire £58bn education budget in real terms over the next parliament — would still lead to a drop in the amount spent on each child.

Unveiling his plans, Mr Miliband accused the Conservatives of planning "big cuts" to early years and further education spending, which will be included within Labour's wider, inflation-protected ringfence. A week before, David Cameron said a future Tory government would maintain the "flat cash" spent on each pupil aged between five and 16, resulting in a real-terms drop in funding during the next spending round.

"Our future prosperity depends on our young people," Mr Miliband said as

he attacked the Tory proposals. "And we will not, we must not, let them down."

But while Mr Cameron's plan takes account of the projected 7 per cent increase in school-aged pupils during the next parliament — on the back of immigration and a sharp rise in the birth rate — Labour's does not. Comparing the announcements, the Institute for Fiscal Studies think-tank concluded there was "not a meaningful" difference between what the two parties were offering, given that the real-terms boost promised by Labour would be effectively cancelled out by the rise in school pupils allowed for by the Tories.

Nick Gibb, Tory education minister, said that his party would spend £590m

more on schools between 2015 and 2020 than the opposition. Labour hit back, querying the Tories' figures.

"Projections show inflation rise will be greater than that of per pupil projections," Labour said.

"We will outspend the Tories not just on schools, but we have protected the entire Department for Education budget in line with inflation, a commitment they can't match because of their risky plans to take public service spending as a proportion of GDP back to levels not seen since the 1930s."

Teaching unions, which have waged several battles against Tory education ministers during the coalition, welcomed Labour's strategy. Mary Bousted,

general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, described it as an "important and significant" commitment. "Schools and colleges will not achieve the ambitious goals, rightly set for them, without adequate funding. Labour has recognised this need."

The University and College Union, which represents staff at further education institutions, which will not see their spending protected under Tory plans, also hailed the Labour proposal. "For too long, further education has had to bear the brunt of funding cuts," said Sally Hunt, general secretary. "We are pleased that Ed Miliband has pledged the sector will not suffer the same plight under a Labour administration."

Hinkley Point

Nuclear plant hit by setback on EDF equity stakes deal

MICHAEL STOTHARD — PARIS AND CHRISTOPHER ADAMS — LONDON

Plans to build the first in a new generation of British nuclear reactors suffered a setback yesterday when EDF disclosed that an investment decision on the £24.5bn project was "months" away, raising the prospect that it could slip beyond the general election in May.

The French energy group's comments have dashed lingering hopes that an agreement on equity stakes in the Hinkley Point plant, in southwest England, might be reached by an end of March deadline.

During a conference call following the group's full-year results, chief executive Jean-Bernard Lévy said this year was the new timeframe: "We are in the final phase of negotiations, but that phase can take a considerable amount of time."

EDF Energy, the group's UK unit, said the company was "working hard" to finalise a deal on Hinkley Point C, due to come online by 2025, and aimed to agree documents — including details of the contract for difference (CFD), or price at which the power will be sold — in the coming weeks.

"This will allow a final investment decision to be possible in the next few months," it said.

The group added it was "also making progress in talks with future investment partners in the project. In particular, progress is being made with Chinese partners on all aspects of their nuclear industrial co-operation in the UK, which is part of the wider partnership between EDF and Chinese companies".

Its comments come amid recent signs that negotiations with potential partners — China General Nuclear Power Corp, China National Nuclear Corp, France's Areva, Saudi Electric and several pension funds — had stalled over Chinese demands.

The Chinese energy companies, which are rivals, have been at odds over their precise share of the project. Both have been pushing for a substantial share of the supply chain contracts — a demand that has held up negotiations, although it is understood to have been met.

They are also interested in buying into proposed reactor projects at Sizewell in Suffolk and Bradwell in Essex, the second of which they want to use to pioneer their own reactor design. This has been a stumbling block.

Potential investors are also understood to want to see the agreement on the CFD in place before making a final commitment.

If the talks slip into April, final agreement is likely to be delayed until after the May election, as Whitehall comes to a standstill in the pre-election period. It is unclear, moreover, how a new administration might regard Hinkley, seen by some critics as an expensive use of taxpayer subsidies when cheaper gas plants could be built more quickly.

This would be just the latest hold-up. When EDF struck a deal in October 2013 with the UK government, the company said it hoped to have a final sign-off from investors, who will put in half of the capital, by the summer of 2014.

EDF reported net income up 5.2 per cent at €3.7bn over the full year as output at its nuclear plants exceeded forecasts. Mr Lévy also sought to quell rumours that the group planned to take a stake in some of the units of Areva, a key supplier that has been struggling.

Mixed picture Record year for tourism

The government hailed 2014 as a record year for the UK inbound tourist industry after official figures revealed a 6 per cent increase in visitor numbers — but the picture may not be as rosy as it seems.

Ministers and tourism chiefs believe UK inbound tourism is buoyant and enjoying sustained growth since the 2012 London Olympics thanks to a more focused marketing strategy.

But that optimism is pricked by data analysts who monitor long-haul booking transactions from travel agents. They say visitor arrivals last year were weaker than those of several European rivals, and warn the UK inbound industry is losing out in the battle for lucrative US tourists. The British Hospitality Association, which represents UK hotels, restaurants and visitor attractions, also voiced scepticism. Roger Blitz



Shakeyjon/Alamy

Burnley. Manufacturing renaissance

Lancashire town's busy factories buck the trend

Local industry is thriving as investment takes off, but lack of skills threatens the upturn

ANDREW BOUNDS

The roof is going back on the former Michelin plant in Burnley 13 years after the town's biggest employer shut down.

The tyremaker has not returned but BCW, an engineering business founded the year after it shut, has taken over part of the factory.

Workers are adding a roof and walls to the bare pillars and girders that symbolised the Lancashire town's decline in which almost 500 jobs were lost.

"We can still make bits here in the UK," says Alec Cassie, one of the founders of BCW. "And Burnley is a great place to do it."

The town remains an oddity in the UK — more than a fifth of its people work in manufacturing, double the national average.

Its largest employer is still French:

Aircelle, a maker of engine nacelles that help aircraft decelerate on landing, has expanded and has 900 staff in the town. Part of Safran, it supplies Airbus, Boeing and Bombardier among others.

But many of Burnley's problems are common elsewhere. It suffers from low skills, poor transport links and an image sullied by race riots in 2001.

It lost 3,200 jobs during 2004–13, according to the Centre for Cities think-tank. Average wage levels fell almost 9 per cent as workers took voluntary pay cuts to keep their jobs. A fifth of the population receives benefits — one of the highest levels in the country — and skill levels are below the national average.

Wages, at £427 a week, are among the lowest in the country. Unemployment is falling but estimated at about 9 per cent.

The lack of skilled staff threatens a booming economy, says Lynne Livesey, pro vice-chancellor of the University of Central Lancashire.

Uclan established a joint campus with Burnley College in 2009 with £10m funding from the government because of a shortage of graduates in the region.

Professor Livesey said: "The local economy is developing quite strongly, there is increasing demand in advanced manufacturing and a lot of investment and it is going to stall if we don't get the skills coming through."

She said student start-up businesses at Uclan, in nearby Preston, have the highest survival rate of any UK university, with 77 per cent still operating after two years.

About £800m of private and public sector investment has been ploughed into the town of 89,000 in the past



Burnley boom: more than a fifth of its people work in manufacturing

decade. A direct rail link to Manchester is opening, halving journey times from 45 minutes.

The Weavers Triangle, a canalside area of former cotton mills, is being regenerated with support from the Prince of Wales. Boohoo.com, the online fashion retailer, is spending £10m on expanding its distribution centre, which will soon employ 1,000. Even the football team is back in the lucrative Premier League.

The value of goods and services produced in northwest England grew 3.4 per cent in 2013, the joint highest in the country. Burnley is ranked tenth in the UK for the rate of private sector job creation by Centre for Cities, and one in 11 of its small and medium-sized enterprises are classed as high growth.

Velocity Composites, started by three Aircelle employees in 2007, is on the same industrial park as BCW and now has 100 people. Claire Whelan, BCW finance director, said the company had promoted young staff as it expanded to fill vacancies. Annual turnover has hit £16m and it employs 150.

By engaging early with customers to develop parts, it can compete with cheaper producers overseas, she said. "We are working with our customers to ensure we have the competitive advantage — and that the work does remain in the UK. On the strength of that we reinvest in the area."

The need to attract staff led several local businesses, along with the council, to form the Bondholders group. There are now more than 140 members who pay an annual fee to promote the town.

Mark Crabtree, founder and managing director of AMS Neve, which makes sound recording equipment used by top music and Hollywood film studios, has gone a step further. After a prospective employee turned down a job because his wife would not move to Burnley, Mr Crabtree took a camera to the Pennines and drafted a marketing brochure. He now sends it to every job applicant.

"The image of the place is completely out of line with what it is actually like here," he said. "We have lots of stars coming here and they all think it is fantastic."

Holiday travel

Regulator tells Network Rail to review engineering work plans

GILL PLIMMER

Network Rail has been ordered to review all its engineering work before the Easter and May bank holidays to avoid the kind of disruption that blighted Christmas for travellers.

A formal inquiry by the Office of Rail Regulation into the chaos on December 27 and 28 found that the infrastructure operator's contingency plans to handle potential work overruns were inadequate.

Even though Network Rail breached its licence conditions, the regulator said it was satisfied with the work the taxpayer-funded operator was doing to "remedy the failings" and ruled out imposing a heavy fine. In 2008 Network Rail was fined £14m for allowing engineering work to overrun the previous Christmas and New Year.

More than 115,000 passengers travelling to and from stations in London were severely delayed after overruns on maintenance work caused the cancellation of services out of King's Cross, dis-

rupted services at Paddington and led to two-hour waits at Finsbury Park.

The political row that emerged in the wake of the disruption cost Mark Carne, Network Rail's chief executive, his bonus.

The ORR said the delays led to "widespread confusion, frustration, disruption, discomfort, and anxiety" for passengers, many of whom were "were families with young children, the elderly and the vulnerable".

It "identified significant weaknesses in Network Rail's planning, oversight and the incident response, which failed to put the impact on passengers at the centre of decision making".

The regulator stopped short of calling for more radical measures, including the spread of work more evenly throughout the year. But it would audit Network Rail in the autumn and check the operator was making improvements ahead of Christmas next year.

Network Rail is investing £25bn during the next five years on renewing and enhancing the network, making it "criti-

cally important" that any shortcomings are addressed, it added.

Christian Wolmar, a transport expert who is campaigning to be Labour's candidate for mayor of London, said it seemed "extraordinary that Network Rail did not have adequate contingency in place given that major works have



been a feature of the rail industry since it was invented".

Network Rail's own investigation into the Christmas overruns found that poor planning, equipment failures and communication breakdowns, many of them with private contractors, were contributing factors.

The TSSA rail union said: "... NR tried to substitute a small suburban station, Finsbury Park, for mainline King's Cross, which has 12 platforms.

"Any schoolboy knows you cannot get a quart into a pint pot. For some reason, no one at the top of NR seemed to know that basic fact."

David Sidebottom, director at the independent watchdog Passenger Focus, said: "Thousands of passengers were left angry and frustrated when trying to travel at Christmas.

"We welcome this report from the regulator, which echoes our call for industry to put passengers' experience right at the heart of planning, especially for plans to cope and compensate when things go wrong."

Social policy

Tories seek Right to Buy for housing association tenants

JIM PICKARD AND KATE ALLEN

More than 2m people living in social housing could be given the chance to buy their homes under a Conservative party plan to extend discounts offered under the Right to Buy programme to housing association properties.

Some social landlords condemned the plan, saying it could be difficult to implement.

At present Right to Buy applies only to Britain's dwindling numbers of council house tenants, with limited access for 2.5m tenants in properties owned by housing associations. These private not-for-profit companies which, in some cases, date back to the 19th century have gradually replaced councils as the main provider of social housing in the UK.

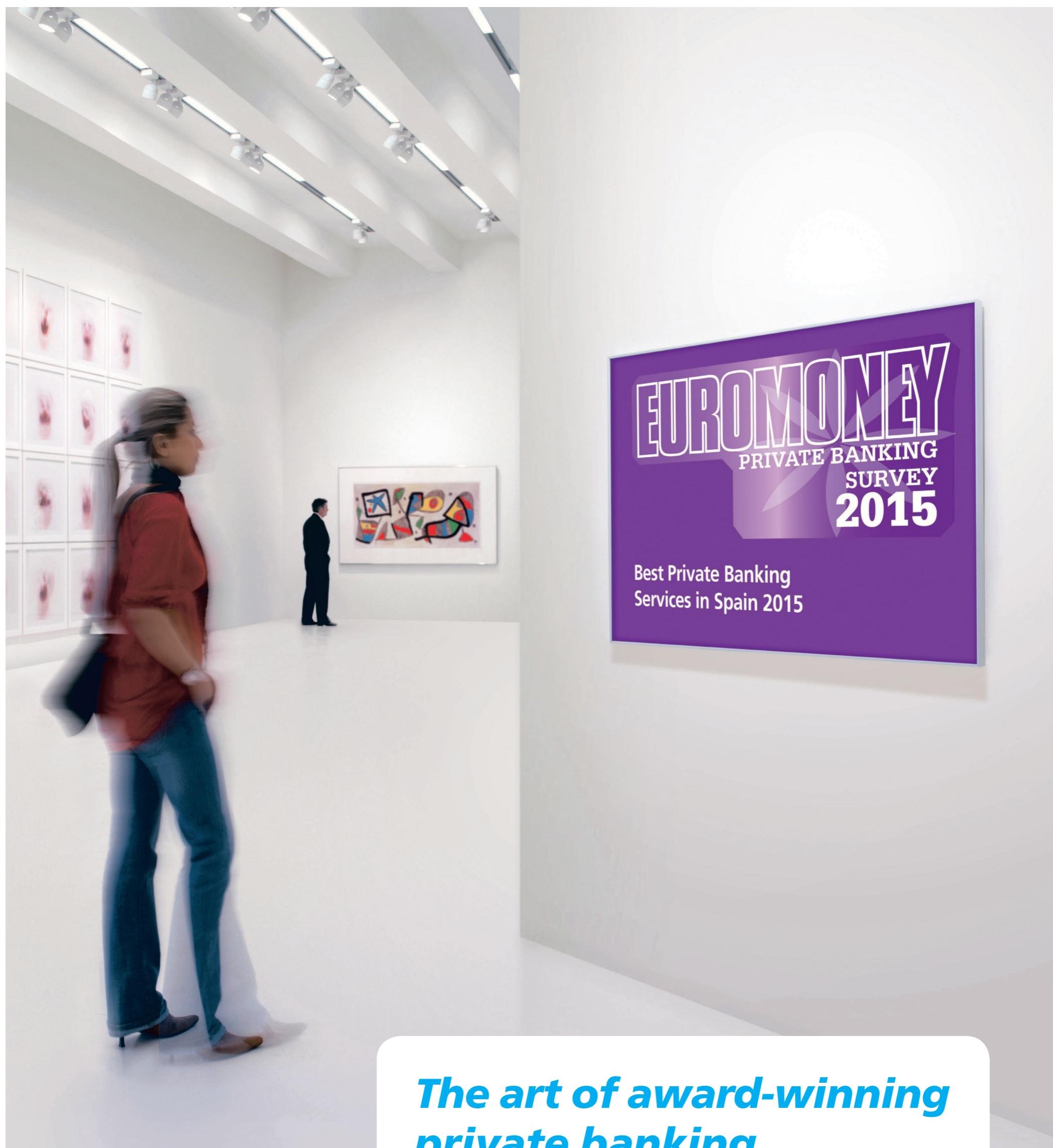
Tenants in these properties are currently offered limited discounts — typically up to £16,000 — and only on prop-

erties bought by the association since 1997.

The original Right to Buy scheme, introduced by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, was hugely popular but has been widely blamed for reducing the availability of social housing. It led to more than 1.5m homes being sold at discounted rates.

The coalition has already tried to revive Right to Buy on council houses by extending the discounts for tenants buying their home: to £77,000 in England and up to £102,700 in London.

More than 27,000 homes have been sold under the programme since the coalition came to power in 2010. A series of housing sector figures have cast doubt on the latest Conservative party proposal. David Orr, chief executive of the National Housing Federation, said that, as charities, many housing associations were legally barred from selling homes at below market value.



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Bailout talks

How Greek compromise slowly unravelled

All-night session finally breaks down over wording of draft final statement

PETER SPIEGEL — BRUSSELS

According to officials who were in the room, it was 18 against one.

When the new Greek finance minister, Yanis Varoufakis, met his eurozone counterparts on Wednesday night, each delivered the same blunt message: the only option for Greece was to complete its current €172bn bailout before they could discuss a new, modified programme.

Some were more polite than others. Michel Sapin, the French finance minister, put it more gently than his colleagues from eastern Europe, some of whom complained their contributions to the Greek bailout were as big as their entire unemployment benefits system.

But the message was the same. The first step for Athens was to request an extension of the bailout, which expires at the end of the month. The new government needed to live up to the commitments made by its predecessors in return for the eurozone's rescue money.

"Germany and the eurogroup are in sync on the Greek issue, so a deal will have to be on Germany's terms," said Mijtaba Rahman, head of European analysis at the Eurasia Group risk consultancy.

The opening exchange preceded an ultimately disappointing meeting between Greece and its creditors, deepening worries that time was running out and that Athens would be left to face financial markets on its own.

For most of the six-hour gathering, many in the room believed Mr Varoufakis, a blogger and game theory expert who has seemed to revel in his outsider status, had finally come on board. For at

least half of their time in the all-night Brussels session, ministers painstakingly pieced together a communiqué that suggested Athens was prepared to request the extension — despite the promise before the Greek parliament days earlier by Alexis Tsipras, the new prime minister, to follow through on his campaign pledge and end the bailout.

"The Greek authorities have agreed to work closely and constructively with the institutions to explore the possibilities for extending and successfully concluding the present programme taking into account the new government's plans," the draft read, according to a copy obtained by the Financial Times.

Several delegations said they believed

FT Brussels blog
Updated: the (almost) agreed statement on Greece
ft.com/brusselsblog

the draft had been agreed, and many ministers, including Germany's Wolfgang Schäuble, departed. But after a phone call to Mr Tsipras, officials said Mr Varoufakis told those remaining he could not back the final language.

Greek officials insist the final text was different from the version Mr Varoufakis had agreed, and that he objected as soon as he saw it. "At no point in time did the Greek delegation give consent to the [final] text," said Nikos Pappas, Mr Tsipras's chief of staff.

Other delegations disagree, saying the main point of contention in the earlier draft — whether the statement should acknowledge the chance of the bailout being "amended" in the future — was scuttled in an open debate by Mr Schäuble, with others' support.

Regardless of the cause of the breakdown, it is now clear Athens will not easily abandon its promise to allow the bailout to expire, possibly leaving

Greece without a financial backstop for the first time since the outbreak of the crisis in May 2010.

"The basic difficulty . . . is whether the basis for discussion is the previous programme [that was] agreed or not," said a Greek government official. "We're looking for a new programme."

At an EU summit in Brussels yesterday, Mr Tsipras said he still believed a "mutually viable solution" was within reach. But with a Monday deadline looming to extend the agreement, and plans only for technical discussions between Athens and its lenders before then, eurozone officials believe Greece will enter March exposed — and fear the market turmoil that might ensue.

"I am definitely worried," said Alex Stubb, the Finnish prime minister. "Time is running out."

Additional reporting by James Politi in Rome
Lex page 16

Currency bloc

Eurozone economy at turning point, says ECB policy maker

CLAIRE JONES — FRANKFURT
RALPH ATKINS — LONDON

The eurozone economy has turned a corner and its recovery will receive a "very good push" from the European Central Bank's programme of government bond buying, its chief economist has said.

"We see a turning point," Peter Praet said in London yesterday. "We start to see better positive signs, not only on the real economy but also in terms of lending conditions."

Mr Praet, who is also a member of the ECB's governing council of monetary policy makers, added that the plan to buy €1.1tn of government bonds and private sector assets from March until next September would bolster an economy that was already benefiting from the slump in oil prices and the weakening of the euro.

"We see this economy gaining momentum," he said. "The context in which we came with [quantitative easing] will be a very good push to this recovery."

Mr Praet's remarks come ahead of the publication today of the first estimate of eurozone growth in the final quarter of 2014. Economists expect the region's economy to have grown by 0.2 per cent between the third and fourth quarters of last year.

A sovereign debt crisis and the aftermath of the global financial turmoil have left the single currency area's economy smaller than it was before the collapse of Lehman Brothers.

More than six years on from the US investment bank's collapse, growth remains stagnant. The showdown between Greece's new leftwing government and its eurozone creditors, as well as geopolitical risks at the region's eastern borders, continue to present a threat to the recovery, Mr Praet said on Greece: "There are clouds around . . . We have to see how it evolves."

The ECB has already fired a warning shot to Athens over its threat to exit its EU programme, scrapping a waiver that allowed Greek lenders to use their government's bonds to access the ECB's cheap cash more than two weeks ahead of schedule. That has meant Greek banks are mostly relying on Emergency Liquidity Assistance, temporary loans granted at the discretion of the Bank of Greece. However, this ELA can also be withdrawn — or limited — if two-thirds of the 25 member governing council impose a block.

"There are very clear rules in terms of Emergency Liquidity Assistance," Mr Praet said. "It's always for solvent banks. We are going to apply the rules as they are. We did it in the past in a flexible way. But it's clear that the banks with access to Emergency Liquidity Assistance must remain solvent."

Mr Praet said in written remarks, also published yesterday, that quantitative easing would translate to lower interest rates and more credit for the eurozone's households and businesses.

Quantitative easing works in part by forcing banks to swap sovereign bonds for other, riskier assets. The ECB's chief economist said these so-called "portfolio rebalancing effects" would be "particularly powerful" in benefiting the region's economy.

Nordic countries. Monetary stance

Riksbank takes leap into the unknown with rate cut

Some experts worry people could resort to hoarding cash if rates remain negative

RICHARD MILNE — NORDIC CORRESPONDENT

In global currency wars, one of the smaller players has just fired a very big weapon.

Sweden's Riksbank yesterday became the first central bank to move its main repo rate into negative territory, as well as launching quantitative easing. It reduced its main repo rate by 10 basis points to minus 0.1 per cent.

The move followed four rate cuts in 18 days from the Danish central bank, which has cut its deposit rate — levied on money parked at the central bank — to a record low of minus 0.75 per cent.

The remarkable actions of Sweden's central bank are raising wider questions about what appears to be a worldwide race to the bottom for interest rates.

The Swedish and Danish rate cuts come just a few weeks ahead of the start of the European Central Bank's QE programme and weeks after the Swiss abandoned their defence of their currency.

Gary Jenkins, chief credit strategist at hedge fund LNG Capital, said the Swedish and Danish moves highlighted the difficulty for small, independent central banks in resisting pressure from the likes of the ECB, US Federal Reserve and Bank of England.

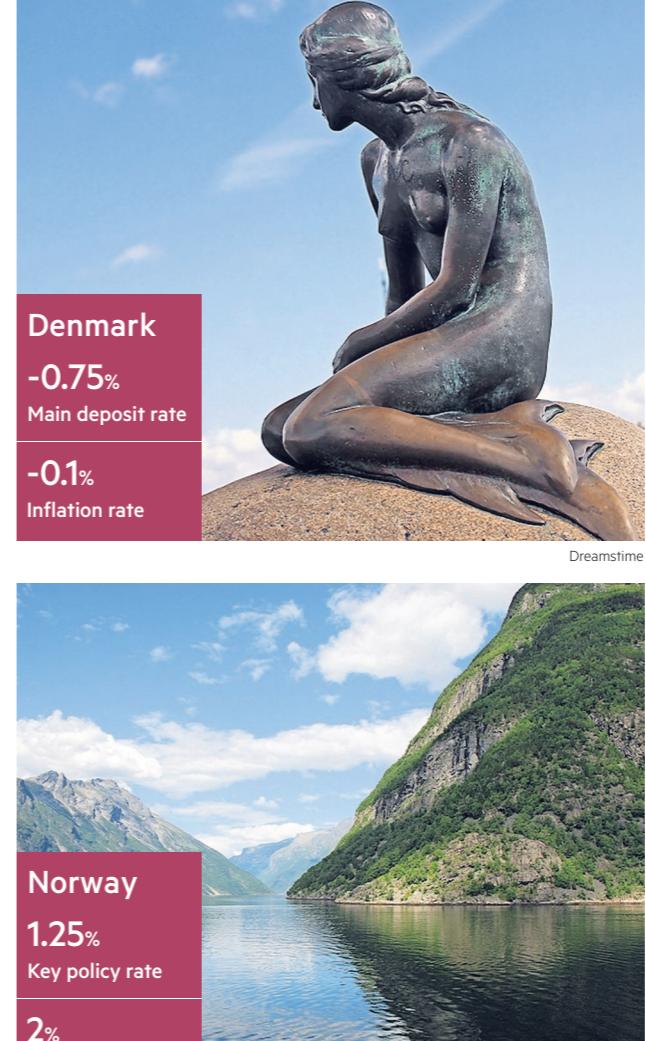
"It's almost like a tidal wave. Even though you have got a firm hold, there is a huge amount washing over you. Yes, they are independent. Yes, they can do what they want. But the truth is that in this very co-ordinated macro world that we live in it is very difficult to be properly independent," he said.

The scale of the Riksbank's actions surprised the markets, with the Swedish krona falling to a six-year low against the dollar.

The Swedish central bank was the first to raise rates after the global financial crisis when it increased them to 2 per cent in 2011. But inflation soon



Sweden
-0.1%
Main repo rate
-0.3%
Inflation rate



Norway
1.25%
Key policy rate
2%
Inflation rate

began to slide — headline rates have been negative for most of the past two years in Sweden — leading to heavy criticism from the likes of Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize-winning economist, and a reversal of the rate rises.

Now the Riksbank has taken a huge leap into the unknown with its latest rate cut. It added that rates could fall further, depending on the reaction from banks and the public.

Some economists worry that people could resort to hoarding cash if rates remain negative. The Riksbank also announced the purchase of SKr10bn in government bonds, a small QE programme, but said it stood ready to "act

quickly where necessary" even between normal monetary policy meetings.

Reaction to the moves in Sweden was mixed. "This smells like a central bank that is panicking," said Mikael Sarwe, head of strategy in Sweden for bank Nordea. "It is very hard to understand [their actions] when you look at the economy with GDP at 2 per cent, employment rising by 1.5-2 per cent, house prices rising by 15 per cent, credit growth booming; all this says that you should not stimulate the economy any more."

Janet Henry, European economist at HSBC, said the Swedish and Danish central banks' moves were "a pre-emptive

strike" ahead of the ECB's QE launch in March.

"These are very small players on the global stage and that is why we are seeing action sooner rather than later," she added.

The Riksbank said it saw signs that the drop in inflation had bottomed out and that consumer prices would rise gradually. But the bank appeared worried that low inflation expectations could become entrenched, a potential problem for wage negotiations.

Mr Sarwe argued that the Riksbank's move could have the opposite effect, however. "In doing this, they might be pushing inflation expectations down

even more because they are signalling to the population 'we have a huge inflation/deflation problem'."

Economists expect the Swedish cut to put further pressure on its neighbouring central banks to cut rates. Norway is likely to cut rates next month despite fears of a housing bubble and it being one of the few countries to have inflation close to its target.

Oystein Olsen, Norges Bank governor, said: "We are a small open economy. Our monetary policy is affected by what is happening abroad. To explain why Norwegian rates have been so low for such a long time the short answer is that rates internationally are so low."

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FINANCIAL TIMES
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April election

Centre party leader pledges to run Finland like a business

RICHARD MILNE — HELSINKI

Juha Sipilä succeeded as a telecoms entrepreneur with the same hands-on approach that led him to build his own house and even a gas-fuelled car. Now, Finnish voters hope he can engineer a turnaround in a Nordic nation mired in recession and suffering a crisis of confidence.

The millionaire, who has founded several telecoms and bioenergy companies, is head of the Centre party, a dominant force of postwar Finnish politics and the frontrunner for April's elections. The Centre party tops recent polls with about 26 per cent, almost 10 percentage points ahead of any rivals.

Mr Sipilä says he wants to employ many of the strategies that worked in his companies — from a master plan with five main goals to running his cabinet more like a management board.

"At the moment people think there is a lack of leadership and hard decision-making in the country, and maybe the practical way of solving problems. I'm not very good in political games, let's say, so I am more or less a practical problem solver," he told the Financial Times.

Mr Sipilä is new to politics, becoming a member of parliament in 2011 and then party chairman a year later. He is wedded to the same core policies for which Finland has become famous — from an attachment to budget austerity that makes the Germans seem lax to opposing membership of Nato.

On Greece, he says he is "quite hard-line", arguing that Athens needs to "follow the agreed [bailout] programme". On Nato, he says there should be a debate on membership but that "at the moment I can't see any reason to send an application".

His bigger focus is likely to be the revival of Finland's moribund economy. Despite the boost from low oil prices and a weaker euro, few economists expect much, if any, growth this year. It is a shocking fall from grace — both in gross domestic product terms and identity — for a country that once boasted one of the world's largest mobile phone companies, Nokia, before it was overtaken by rivals and then part-swallowed by Microsoft last year.

During a previous crisis in the 1990s, Finland's GDP fell by 14 per cent over three years. Yet Mr Sipilä argues "this

situation is worse because we don't have any big vision at the moment . . . We haven't done the big reforms in the good times, and they are very difficult to make now in the bad times."

His solution is more austere, including €2bn in extra cuts even if "the number one priority is to find a growth plan again". While Finnish politicians are fairly united on the ailments and pro-

posed solutions — Mr Sipilä mentions growth, reform and budget cuts as the tools needed — the key is one of implementation. Nearly everyone in Helsinki agrees that the six parties the government started with were too many, and this is one of the reasons it has struggled to pass reforms. Mr Sipilä wants to reduce the number of ministers from 17 to 12 "so that we can lead the government like a management team".

He is open to working with any of his

three big rivals — the National Coalition party of prime minister Alex Stubb, the Social Democrats, and the populist Finns. "The main thing is that we can agree on five targets and about the vision and then there is a trust between the people," he says, "and this is the way I am used to managing companies."

Despite riding high in the polls, there is a certain nervousness among business leaders as to just what Mr Sipilä stands for. This week, his party was forced to back down on a plan to restrict beer sales after a public backlash.

A Finnish biotech executive, who says he likes Mr Sipilä, adds: "I'm not really sure what his main policies are and if he's able to bring along his party, which is this slightly peculiar mix of farmers and urban liberals."

Still, his do-it-yourself mentality plays well with Finns and is often on display. He recalls, for example, taking his then-boss at ADC Telecommunications that bought his business Solitra, to his house in northern Finland.

"I said that I have built the stairs and my boss asked: 'Don't you have any carpenters in Finland?' It opens my eyes also, that this is not a typical thing to do."



UKRAINE CONFLICT

Minsk II leaves observers with strong sense of déjà vu

Many agenda items were agreed last year in the same city but never implemented

NEIL BUCKLEY — LONDON
KATHRIN HILLE — MOSCOW
ROMAN OLEARCHYK — KIEV

The talks in Minsk were billed as possibly the last chance to secure peace before the conflict in eastern Ukraine escalated into a full-blown war with Russia — and even into a broader European conflagration.

But European leaders and analysts were sceptical of the 13-point document that emerged yesterday morning after 16 hours of bruising, all-night discussions in Minsk. Some warned that Russia's President Vladimir Putin appeared to have come out on top.

Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, whose frantic shuttle diplomacy together with François Hollande, France's president, paved the way for the agreement, said it "gives us a glimmer of hope" for settling a conflict that has claimed 5,300 lives.

But Dalia Grybauskaite, Lithuania's prime minister and a staunch Moscow critic, said the failure to ensure Ukraine could rapidly restore control over its porous eastern border with Russia made the deal "absolutely weak".

The White House said it welcomed the agreement but that the "true test" would be a "full and unambiguous implementation".

A US official said: "Any effort to grab more land before the Saturday night deadline will seriously undermine this agreement." The official said the US was still prepared to introduce new sanctions if the agreement were not honoured, while sending weapons to Ukraine also remained under consideration.

Donald Tusk, the European Council president, also warned that the "real test is the respect of the ceasefire on the ground".

The agreement calls for a ceasefire at midnight tomorrow and a pullback of heavy weapons from the front lines to create a demilitarised zone, followed by local elections in rebel-held regions under Ukrainian law.

But the biggest reason for caution is that all these steps were in the earlier Minsk agreement signed last September but never fully implemented.

Many observers also sense that Russia may have got much of what it wanted out of the deal, as reflected in a quip by its foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, late on Wednesday night, that the talks were going "better than ever". Like its predecessor, the agreement still does not explicitly recognise Russia and its forces as a party to the conflict, even though it calls for withdrawal of "foreign armed forces" from east Ukraine.

Despite pressure from the French and German leaders, according to one senior Ukrainian official, Mr Putin even refused to sign a declaration endorsing the ceasefire text, although, in a compromise, he gave it verbal support. The ceasefire itself was signed by a "contact group" of representatives of Ukraine, Russia, pro-Russian rebels in east Ukraine and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Perhaps Russia's biggest success was to push back the deadline for restoring Ukraine's control of the gaping hole in its Russian border, through which Moscow has been pouring men and weapons, until the "end of 2015". The text also made that step conditional on achieving "comprehensive political settlement".

President Petro Poroshenko of



The main points of the deal

- Ceasefire in eastern Ukraine to begin midnight Saturday
- Withdrawal of heavy weapons to create a minimum 50km buffer zone; withdrawal of foreign forces. OSCE to monitor
- Restore Ukraine's control of its borders by end of 2015, pending political settlement
- Constitutional reform to ensure greater decentralisation and local governance in Donetsk and Lugansk

Job done:
President Vladimir Putin leaves the peace talks in Minsk yesterday
Tatyana Zenkovich/Epa

The deal does not explicitly recognise Russia and its forces as a party to the conflict

Ukraine scored a win by keeping the word "federalisation" — political anathema to Kiev — out of the agreement. Russia has pressed for Ukraine to shift to an extremely loose federal structure similar to that agreed for Bosnia in the 1995 Dayton agreement.

People familiar with the Minsk talks and their preparations said Berlin and Paris had been exasperated by Mr Poroshenko's reluctance to agree to federalisation. In the end, the text called only for constitutional reform leading to "decentralisation" of powers to the regions. It also did not give the Russian-backed rebel regions of Donetsk and Lugansk a say in foreign and security policy, which would give them a potential veto over moves by Ukraine to integrate more closely with the EU or Nato.

But some analysts warned that Russia's success on the border issue might give it leverage to push for deeper constitutional changes. Ievgen Vorobiov, of the Polish Institute of International Affairs, warned that any failure by Kiev to produce the structure Russia and the eastern rebels are demanding could give

them "reason to block the transition of control over the border".

A senior Ukrainian official suggested the fact that this deal, unlike the first Minsk agreement, was signed as the direct result of negotiations with European leaders put more pressure on Mr Putin to comply. "If Russia keeps supplying weapons to terrorists" — as Kiev terms the separatists — "that will be the strongest message to the international community that finding compromise and reaching an agreement with President Putin is impossible," he said.

Given the questions over the deal, Eugene Rumer of the Carnegie Endowment in Washington said he expected the US Congress to push even harder to supply defensive weapons to Ukraine.

Some in Kiev also warned that the country had to develop a "plan B" involving further beefing up its military defences and working to acquire lethal military assistance.

Additional reporting by Geoff Dyer in Washington
Editorial Comment page 12
Philip Stephens page 13

FT

The World blog
After Minsk — why the 'arms to Ukraine' debate will continue
ft.com/theworld

Diplomacy. Continental crises

'World chancellor' Merkel faces more sleepless nights

Russia and Greece still present huge challenges for Europe's most powerful leader

STEFAN WAGSTYL — BRUSSELS

Chancellor Angela Merkel's face when she arrived at the Brussels summit yesterday bore the signs of the sleepless nights she has endured in the past week in a prodigious quest for a settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

But in spite of the deep rings around her eyes, there was no rest in sight for Europe's most powerful leader. Just hours after the all-night Ukraine negotiations in Minsk, she was preparing for talks with her 27 fellow EU leaders — not least Alexis Tsipras, the radical new Greek prime minister with whom Germany is clashing over the country's bailout.

"I have a certain camel-like quality," Ms Merkel, 60, once said, explaining her capacity to keep going when others would have collapsed with tiredness.

She has needed every ounce of it this week covering some 20,000km on an itinerary of Berlin-Kiev-Berlin-Moscow-Munich-Berlin-Washington-Ottawa-Berlin-Minsk-Brussels.

That travel reflects the desperate difficulty of securing any kind of agreement from Vladimir Putin, the Russian president. For all the effort, the ceasefire deal struck early yesterday morning is little different from a previous one reached in Minsk last September but never implemented. Upon arrival in Brussels, Ms Merkel was more sober than triumphant, saying: "This is a glimmer of hope. Deeds must now follow words."

It is her political style to tackle difficult problems step by step. With the Ukraine crisis, the first aim has long been to stop the fighting — and then hope that a ceasefire can create a little breathing space for further talks and, perhaps, movement.

Berlin officials concede that full implementation of the latest Minsk agreement might be a long shot — but believe even a "frozen conflict" in which

the two sides did nothing more than stop fighting would be worth the huge diplomatic effort.

The latest initiative sprang from a letter Mr Putin sent a month ago to Petro Poroshenko, the Ukrainian president, offering peace talks. With the support of François Hollande, the French president, Ms Merkel decided it was worth engaging the Kremlin chief, especially with the fighting intensifying around the strategic town of Debaltseve and growing calls in the US for the west to arm Kiev.

Days of shuttle diplomacy finally brought the Minsk meeting — and praise at home for the dogged chancellor.



Embrace: Angela Merkel and François Hollande yesterday

"Merkel: the world chancellor" ran a headline in Bild, the tabloid.

But as Ms Merkel said herself, huge challenges still lie ahead. First, there is the need to maintain pressure on Mr Putin to stop the fighting — even though the chancellor's capacity to squeeze the Kremlin chief is limited. Next, there is holding together the EU on economic sanctions against Russia. The escalating fighting has made this easier in the short term. Penalties imposed on individuals and companies over Moscow's Crimea annexation have been extended to September. But the critical test comes in the summer, when broader economic sanctions come up for review.

In the meantime, Germany will be at the forefront of negotiations with Mr Tsipras, who is determined to amend Greece's bailout. Berlin has come under pressure to give ground. But it fears doing so would have consequences far beyond Greece, in effect undermining desperately needed reform efforts across the eurozone. In short, the leader striving to contain Europe's simmering crises faces more sleepless nights.

Donetsk

Rebels hail accord as step towards recognition

COURTNEY WEAVER — DONETSK

Less than an hour after Germany, France, Ukraine and Russia announced the ceasefire, a few dozen supporters of the self-declared Donetsk People's Republic were waving flags, dancing and cheering.

They were not welcoming the peace accord. Instead, the celebration had been organised some time ago to mark a DPR holiday: the 97th anniversary of the Donetsk-Krivoy Soviet Republic, a self-declared state that existed for six weeks in early 1918.

But the message was the same: whatever the finer points of the Minsk memorandum, the Donetsk People's Republic, at least in the rebel leaders' minds, is here to stay.

Yesterday, rebels spun the Minsk agreement as a victory for the separatist republics — even though it is supposed to restore Kiev's control of Ukraine's

"The Minsk agreement doesn't exist yet. The Minsk agreement is a piece of paper with some text on it. The Minsk memorandum is meant to be a sequential plan. Once one point is fulfilled then we can go on to the next . . . Once we start reaching the points in the memorandum we don't like, by that point we'll be holding negotiations with a different country," he said, arguing that Kiev would be by then a new leadership.

Viktor Yatsenko, the DPR's communications minister, painted the Minsk memorandum as a step towards stability and the fledgling republic's long-held goal: international recognition. "Can you imagine an unrecognized republic with five million people? Or a million?" he asked. "Not recognising the economic driver of a country physically



located in Europe is absurd. It's not advantageous for anyone."

While the rebels have captured about 1,500 square km of new territory since the last Minsk ceasefire in September, the fighting has taken a heavy toll on the local population, many of whom have been living under constant shelling for months. In the most heavily hit suburbs of Donetsk, dozens of residents, mostly pensioners, live in bomb shelters.

At Donetsk's Kalinin hospital, Ivan Plokhotnikov, deputy chief doctor, said that one in four new patients was a victim of war-related injuries following the increase in fighting earlier this year. Rebels reported six people were killed on Wednesday morning after shelling hit a Donetsk bus station, while another casualty was reported after a strike near a hospital yesterday.

Nearly 100 of the hospital's patients receive dialysis and may die without extra medicine and equipment needed for treatment, Mr Plokhotnikov said. At present, the hospital has only enough dialysis supplies to last a few weeks. "It's a humanitarian catastrophe," he said.

Debt restructuring

IMF rescue will provide Kiev with \$17.5bn over four years

ANNE-SYLVIANE CHASSANY AND PETER SPIEGEL — BRUSSELS

The International Monetary Fund yesterday said it would provide a new four-year \$17.5bn bailout for Ukraine that is expected to lead to a restructuring of Kiev's privately held debts so that it can shore up its public finances.

The rescue replaces a \$17bn programme launched less than a year ago but abandoned when the conflict with Russian-backed separatists in Ukraine's eastern districts worsened. The IMF had distributed \$4.5bn in the first programme, bringing the fund's total commitment to Ukraine to \$22bn.

With separate EU and US pledges already made — and expected promises of bilateral loans from the world's biggest economies worth several billion dollars — the size of the financial aid package will reach \$40bn.

Christine Lagarde, the IMF's managing director, called the programme "realistic", saying: "It's an ambitious plan but not without risk."

Addressing the IMF's previous disappointments with Ukraine, she said: "Why is this different this time? Clearly, the Ukrainian authorities are demonstrating courage to reform we've never seen before."

But Tim Ash, emerging markets analyst at Standard Bank, disputed Ms Lagarde's characterisation of the package. "This is not a significantly increased IMF programme, and Lagarde should not try to sell it as such," he wrote.

After stripping out the undisbursed money from the existing bailout, the new one includes only \$5.8bn in additional IMF funds, Mr Ash noted. "The problem has been that the fund has been reluctant to commit significant new funds to Ukraine given concerns over the conflict situation," he added.

The new bailout was announced just before Ukraine reached a ceasefire agreement with Russian-backed separatists after a long meeting in Minsk between president Petro Poroshenko, Russia's Vladimir Putin, Germany's

Angela Merkel and François Hollande. The ceasefire is to take place from midnight tomorrow, according to Mr Putin.

The IMF told member countries in December that a \$15bn gap had opened up in Kiev's finances since the programme began. Earlier this month, Kiev said its foreign currency reserves had dwindled to just \$5.4bn, from \$16.3bn in May. Analysts at Dragon Capital reckon Ukraine has external funding needs of \$45bn over the next three years.

The IMF did not say how much of a haircut Ukrainian bondholders would have to take in order to meet its revised assumptions under the new programme. Such restructuring will be negotiated between Kiev and its creditors. Ukraine's finance minister Natalia Jaresko said negotiations with sovereign debt holders would start in March.

Another question is how the Ukrainian government will deal with a \$3bn loan owed to the Russian government. Under a normal debt restructuring, all creditors must be treated equally, but there are exceptions for debts owed to other governments, depending on the terms of the loan. Last year, Kiev also issued a \$1bn bond guaranteed by the US.

Ms Lagarde did not elaborate on any possible Russian contribution.

Arseniy Yatseniuk, the Ukrainian prime minister, said the talks with the IMF had stalled at the eleventh hour over the fund's demands to reform the country's energy sector, which eats up huge government expenditures because of large subsidies.

"The talks are difficult because nobody gives anyone money just like that," said Mr Yatseniuk.

Additional reporting by Roman Olearchyk in Kiev

\$17bn

Rescue scheme was launched less than a year ago

\$5.4bn

Amount of Ukraine's current foreign currency reserves

INTERNATIONAL

Cyber threats

Obama seeks backing on data-share push

President asks companies to put privacy fears aside and buttress US security

GEOFF DYER — WASHINGTON

HANNAH KUCHLER — SAN FRANCISCO

After the bruising recriminations between the White House and the technology industry over the National Security Agency, Barack Obama will travel to the Bay Area today to enlist Silicon Valley's support for his post-Snowden push for cyber security legislation.

Mr Obama will host senior executives from the tech, finance and healthcare sectors at a cyber security "summit" at Stanford University as part of his attempt to encourage greater sharing of information about cyber threats.

Responding to the steady stream of major data breaches at US companies in recent months, including Sony, Anthem and Target, the president unveiled a series of cyber security proposals in his State of the Union address last month, some of them new and some revived.

Yet while Mr Obama's renewed focus

on cyber security has been welcomed by the tech industry, the president will continue to face some of the same suspicions over the privacy of online data that were highlighted by Edward Snowden about the NSA in 2013.

Speakers will include Tim Cook, chief executive of Apple, and officials from the Federal Bureau of Investigation who have criticised Apple for introducing encrypted messages that cannot be read by law enforcement. The White House is calling on Congress to again take up a bill that would encourage companies to share information with the government about cyber threats by giving them legal liability protection.

The government argues that a two-way flow between private and public sectors is the best way to respond to hackers. "We are not going to bottle up our intelligence," said Lisa Monaco, the senior White House official on terrorism and homeland security issues, on Tuesday. But she added that "the private sector has vital information that we do not always see unless they share it with us".

Mr Obama has also proposed measures that would create clearer rules for

how companies report data breaches and which would place limits on the use of data about students that is collected on educational software.

The information-sharing proposal has the support of business groups but has never made it through Congress because of privacy concerns that companies would end up handing over cus-

'The private sector has vital information that we do not always see unless they share it with us'

tomer data to the government. Some legislators have said the administration needs to first place new restraints on the NSA before they will look at the new cyber legislation.

While the White House's information-sharing approach remains controversial in some quarters, the administration has clashed with the tech sector's growing embrace of new encryption tools — which some industry executives and privacy advocates believe to be one of

the best ways of keeping customer data safe from hackers. The latest operating systems for Apple and Google smartphones include encryption that even the companies cannot break.

"Encryption is one of our most important cyber security tools," said Kevin Bankston, policy director at the Open Technology Institute. "We can't allow the short-sighted worries of some law enforcement officials to undermine the longer-term goal of creating a truly secure internet."

Last year, FBI director James Comey warned that the growing use of encryption for privacy could make it harder for law enforcement to solve homicides or find victims of child exploitation. "The post-Snowden pendulum has swung too far in one direction," he said.

Jennifer Granick, director of civil liberties at Stanford Law School's Center for Internet and Society, said she was hopeful the FBI would not succeed in pushing the administration into doing anything that could enforce "backdoors" in encryption.

"These are global companies, they can't provide global customers with a

product with backdoors to the US government. They would die in the market place," she said. "All the economic interests in the world are telling them [the governments and law enforcement agencies pushing for backdoors] no."

Sumit Agarwal from Shape Security, a start-up backed by Google's venture capital arm, said he was worried by the administration's proposal to introduce tougher sentences for breaches of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, which he feared could be used against people who have not done "anything tremendously detrimental" rather than sophisticated cyber criminals.

Scott Borg, director of the US Cyber Consequences Unit, a non-profit research institute that investigates the economic consequences of cyber attacks, dismissed the administration's proposals, saying they would make "little difference to national cyber security".

"Apart from increasing slightly the amount of information being passed around, the 'new role' that's being proposed for the federal government consists mostly of doing things the government is already supposed to be doing."

Paris accord

Climate talks spawn move to cap airline and shipping emissions

PILITA CLARK — GENEVA

A move to cap emissions from airline and shipping companies has emerged in talks on the global climate change agreement to be signed in Paris at the end of this year.

The idea of imposing carbon pollution targets on each industry has appeared in the lengthy negotiating text on which representatives from more than 190 countries began working on in Geneva this week.

The measure is being backed by countries in the EU, which fought a bruising battle three years ago to make international airlines flying to and from Europe pay for their carbon pollution.

Brussels eventually reined in its scheme, confining it to flights within the EU, after it sparked a diplomatic row with some of its largest trading partners, including China and the US.

An additional proposal in the Paris negotiating text would "encourage" international air and shipping bodies to develop a levy scheme to help countries adapt to climate change.

Aviation is one of the fastest-growing sources of greenhouse gas emissions that the Paris deal is supposed to reduce, but the measure is expected to be opposed by many countries.

Still, some envoys in Geneva said they were pleased to see it on the table.

"We're happy to see it being discussed," said Mary Ann Lucille Sering of the Philippines. Her country's many

Including shipping and aviation emissions in a global climate deal has proved difficult in the past



islands meant air travel was important, she said, but it was a relatively small market compared with other nations.

Including shipping and aviation emissions in a global climate deal has proved difficult in the past.

The last big climate pact, the Kyoto protocol agreed in 1997, required rich countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions but did not include pollution from ships or aircraft, partly because it occurs around the world rather than in a single country. Instead, it was left to each industry's specialist UN agency, the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the International Maritime Organisation, to develop a global plan to address emissions.

The ICAO is working on a proposal due to be considered in 2016 and the International Air Transport Association, the aviation industry's main body, said the process was going well and had been recognised by countries in the UN climate talks.

"The industry is fully supporting ICAO's work in this area," a representative said, adding that Iata's members had agreed a resolution in 2013 calling on governments to develop a global market-based measure in line with its commitment to carbon-neutral growth from 2020. But some say progress is still far too slow and the move to include aviation emissions in particular in the Paris deal is welcome.

Bill Hemmings, aviation and shipping programme manager at the Brussels-based Transport & Environment research organisation, said that with aviation and shipping each accounting for around 3 per cent of global CO₂ emissions, and with air travel in particular growing fast, it was time both sectors faced targets to limit their pollution.

"How can we have large countries like China and the US, and developing countries making commitments to cut their emissions while these two sit on their hands?" he said.

Research. Fuel and power technology

Energy experts toil in effort to transform the world

US agency gives funding to hundreds of projects but fails to achieve big breakthrough

ED CROOKS — NEW YORK

The Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy, the US government office that funds research into fuel and power technologies, is that rare phenomenon in Washington, an Obama administration initiative with bipartisan support.

There have been battles in Congress over funding the agency since it was launched as part of President Barack Obama's stimulus programme in 2009, but it has in most years been able to secure the funding it needs to keep its spending steady.

Its record, however, shows that achieving "transformational" breakthroughs in energy may be even tougher than finding common ground across party lines.

Arpa-E, as the agency is known, has committed more than \$1.1bn to more than 400 research projects, but has not yet come up with a technology that looks like it is about to change the world.

Some of the projects it has backed looked like bright hopes for a while, and then sputtered out.

"I think the signs are there," Cheryl Martin, Arpa-E's deputy director, says.

"Technology takes time. Energy is not a fast-to-adopt sector."

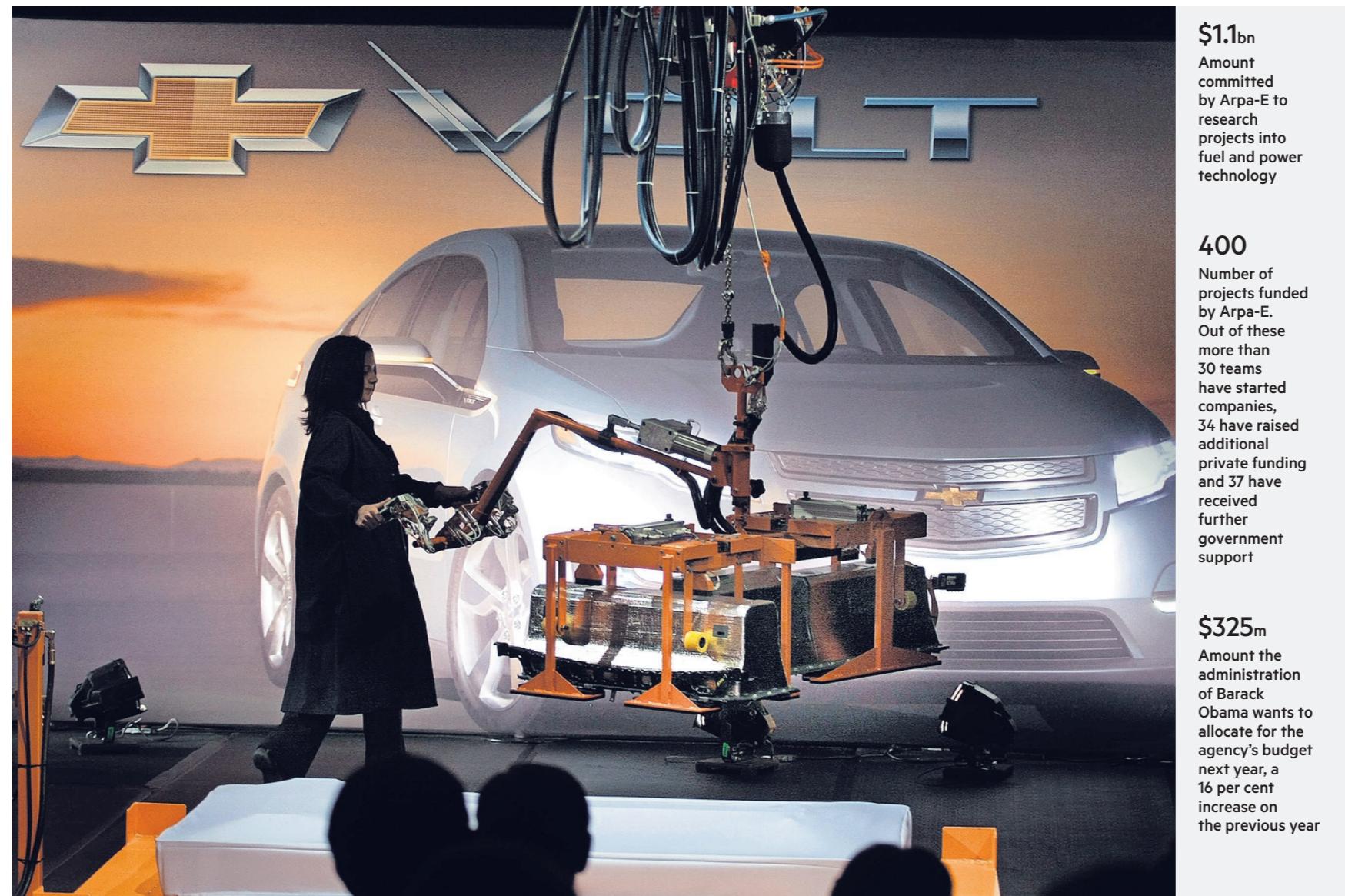
Arpa-E was modelled on the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the military technology office that was set up in 1958 and, among other things, played a critical role in the creation of the internet.

The 2007 legislation that established Arpa-E set its goals as cutting US energy imports, reducing greenhouse gases and other emissions, improving energy efficiency and giving the US a global lead in advanced energy technology.

Its paradoxical mission is to look for what Ms Martin calls "crazy out-of-the-box transformational ideas" that are nevertheless realistic prospects for commercial deployment.

At the agency's annual "energy innovation summit" in Washington this week, hundreds of those ideas were on display, including electric vehicle batteries that would be built into a car body; engineered beets for biofuel production, and new materials for storing natural gas in vehicle fuel tanks.

The agency's most conspicuous disap-



A battery pack for the GM Chevrolet Volt comes off the assembly line in Michigan. An Arpa-E deal with GM was axed in 2013

Bill Pugliano/Getty Images

pointment has been Envia Systems, a battery company that was awarded an Arpa-E grant and raised hopes of a breakthrough in electric car technology when it signed deals with General Motors. The agreement was terminated amid acrimony in August 2013.

On the other side of the ledger, Arpa-E can claim to have made significant progress. Of the 400-plus projects it has funded, more than 30 teams have started companies, 34 have raised additional private funding and 37 have received further government support.

The agency has helped some projects to market, including batteries sold by Arizona-based Fluidic Energy which are used to guarantee power supplies to mobile phone masts in developing countries. However, it is still unclear whether any of them will have the transformational impact that Arpa-E seeks.

Ms Martin rejects suggestions that the

agency is giving up on world-changing technologies to focus on incremental improvements, such as more energy-efficient air-conditioners.

"We should never, ever, ever mistake important for sexy," she says.

"Just because it doesn't sound nuts, doesn't mean it isn't really important."

In spite of Arpa-E's chequered record, its future seems assured.

Lisa Murkowski, the Republican senator from Alaska, criticised Mr Obama last week for being "timid" with his request for the agency's budget next year: a 16 per cent increase to \$325m. She has been a supporter of Arpa-E from the time it was proposed under President George W Bush.

Since it was conceived, the agency has risked looking increasingly irrelevant beside the entirely independent revolution in US energy, the shale gas and oil boom of the past decade. That revolution

has largely passed Arpa-E by, although it did in December fund a batch of projects designed to prevent polluting and wasteful methane leaks.

However, Ms Martin argues that the transformation in views on energy that has been brought about by the Fukushima nuclear disaster and the shale boom is a good reason to keep researching a wide range of technologies today.

"Why should we think five years, 10 years, 15 years in the future we know what's going to happen?" she asks.

"Arpa-E's job is to create options for the uncertain future."

Ms Murkowski, who took over as chairwoman of the Senate energy committee at the start of the year, says: "Finding space in the budget for any funding increase is a serious challenge, and something we need to be very cautious about. But I think Arpa-E is a programme that may actually deserve it."

'We should never, ever, ever mistake important for sexy'

Cheryl Martin, Arpa-E deputy director

Middle East

Yemen on brink of civil war as Houthi takeover sparks violent backlash across country

SIMEON KERR — DUBAI

Yemen is descending into civil war as a backlash against the takeover of the government by Shia Houthi rebels becomes more violent, the UN has warned.

"Yemen is collapsing before our eyes," Ban Ki-moon, UN secretary-general, told the Security Council yesterday, adding that the international community could not stand by and watch.

Lawlessness has grown in Sana'a, the capital, with thousands demonstrating against the Houthis there and in other cities around the impoverished country.

Western diplomatic missions this week evacuated their staff on security

grounds. Violence is increasing as the Shia group, allegedly backed by Iran, pushes into southern and eastern regions, sparking a violent reaction from tribes and jihadis.

Adding to the confusion, al-Qaeda militants yesterday over-ran a large army base in the south of the country.

Jamal Benomar, the UN envoy to Yemen, warned on Wednesday night that the country was spiralling out of control. "We believe the situation is very dangerous. Yemen is on the brink of civil war," he said.

Mr Benomar, whose attempts to broker a settlement failed last week, blamed the country's various political

groups for seeking to impose their demands on others.

The Houthis, who follow the Zaydi offshoot of Shia Islam, originated in northern Yemen and swept into Sana'a last September. Last week they unilaterally dissolved parliament and set up a two-year transition process under their leadership.

The group faces opposition from Sunni tribesmen and al-Qaeda fighters, as well as the youth revolutionary movement that has, until now, remained peaceful. Southern secessionists add another explosive element to the diverse patchwork of tribal, regional and religious affiliations.



Houthi militia members patrol in central Sana'a this week

"There are multiple and different sources of violent resistance [to the Houthis]," said Ibrahim Sharqieh, a conflict resolution analyst at the Brookings Doha Center in Qatar.

The collapse of central authority in such a strategically important country would have a sharp impact on regional stability. As well as empowering al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, which has a strong presence in remote areas, it could threaten the 4m barrels of oil that are transported daily through the Bab al-Mandab strait between Yemen and Somalia.

"If there is a civil war, that means another failed state like Somalia, and

the possible closure of the Bab al-Mandab strait," said Mr Sharqieh.

Analysts say broader conflagration is increasingly likely. Opponents of the Houthis have opened fire on checkpoints in the capital. The Houthis have also targeted their critics.

Jihadis yesterday claimed to have overrun a large army camp, the base of the 19th infantry brigade in Baishan, around 300km southeast of Sana'a, killing seven, including three soldiers. Ansar al-Sharia, AQAP's main arm, claimed the attack in a statement on Twitter, accusing the army of being linked to Houthi fighters in the capital.

Additional reporting by agencies

INTERNATIONAL

Defence

Egypt to order Rafale jets from France

Deal for 24 war planes and a frigate as Cairo bolsters forces against jihadi threat

MICHAEL STOTHARD — PARIS
BORZOU DARAGAHI — CAIRO

Egypt is set to order 24 Rafale fighter jets alongside a warship and other related equipment, according to President François Hollande, in what would mark the end of years of France's failed attempts to export the plane abroad.

France and Egypt have been negotiating since November last year on the sale of the multipurpose war planes, a Fremm naval frigate and MBDA air-to-air missiles in a multibillion-euro deal,

according to people close to the talks. "The Egyptian authorities have just let me know their intention of acquiring 24 Rafale planes, a multi-mission frigate as well as related equipment," said Mr Hollande, adding that the deal would be signed by the French defence minister in Cairo on Monday.

"The equipment will allow Egypt to increase its security and play a role in promoting regional stability," a statement from the Elysée read.

Eric Trappier, the chief executive of Dassault Aviation, thanked Egypt for its "trust" and Paris for "political support" for the export.

However, Egypt's gathering security woes have curtailed economic growth and many questioned why Egypt was

now buying such an expensive arms package.

Egypt's military commanders see themselves as the backbone of national identity and prosperity, and crave the prestige of advanced weaponry and the potent armed forces of other regional powers, including Israel, Saudi Arabia and Algeria. They have long sought to phase out their Mirage jets and have been annoyed by the reluctance of the US to provide some arms, said Michael Wahid Hanna, an Egypt security specialist at the Century Foundation, a New York think-tank.

Egypt has to contend with jihadis at its extreme east and west. It faces a smouldering insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula that has managed to stage devastating

The arms 'will allow Egypt to increase its security and play a role in promoting regional stability'

attacks on the armed forces. In January a multi-pronged raid on military bases in several cities showed the strength of militant groups drifting towards the tactics and ideology of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or Isis.

Cairo also sees a threat in Libya, where it has reportedly intervened several times with air power.

But Mr Hanna noted that Egypt had yet to use its fleet of F-16s to their full extent and relied on Apache helicopters for Sinai counter-insurgency efforts.

Dassault Aviation, the French group that plays the leading role in manufacturing the fighter jet, has for the past three years been in exclusive negotiations with India for 126 planes, but has so far failed to sign the final contract.

GLOBAL INSIGHT

NEW DELHI

Amy Kazmin



Voters demand more than just a fashion statement from Modi

Could it have been because of his suit? Narendra Modi, the Indian prime minister, set tongues wagging last month when the pinstripe he wore for a tête-à-tête with Barack Obama, US president, was revealed not to be a pinstripe at all. Rather, the stripes were formed of the premier's full name in tiny letters through the fabric.

Just two weeks later, Mr Modi's Bharatiya Janata party has been routed in New Delhi's local elections by the new Aam Aadmi (Common Man) party, led by anti-corruption crusader Arvind Kejriwal, whose only fashion statement has been the woollen muffler wrapped around his head.

So could Mr Modi's sartorial misjudgment have triggered the landslide, in which the two-year-old AAP won an astonishing 67 of 70 seats in Delhi's local legislature?

Not entirely. But it was seen as a symptom that Mr Modi, now ensconced in the corridors of national power, is losing touch with the concerns of the ordinary voters who prodded him there only eight months ago.

Delhi residents have sent a powerful message to the premier that what voters have given can also be taken away.

In handing the AAP an unprecedented mandate, the capital is essentially auditioning a fledgling party that not only promises effective governance of an unwieldy metropolis, but has a far bigger vision of fundamentally transforming Indian politics.

The AAP's long-term aim is to clean up India's tarnished democracy, ridding it of the corrosive effect of corporate cash secretly funding political parties and campaigns, without any transparency.

The party wants government to be more accessible and accountable to ordinary people, rather than to political grandees and their hidden financial backers.

Junior companies with licences for the region's little-explored oil blocks may also come unstuck by failing to meet investment commitments required by their contracts with government.

"Investor sentiment is down and smaller guys are starting to look to ask government for an extension to their work programmes because they can't afford to meet them," said a blockholder who did not want to be named.

"There are a number of companies who have never had the amount of money they've needed from day one in east Africa — a lot of smaller companies who are just trying to look to flip the asset and sell chunks of the licences — they're hoping to hell that the crude price rebounds."

Production is also held back by the absence of any means of export. Drawn-out talks over a regional export pipeline — for years strongly resisted by Uganda which favoured a large domestic refinery — are only now gathering pace.

Toyota Tsusho, the trading arm of the Japanese carmaker newly mandated by Nairobi and Kampala as consultant for the pipeline, is expected to deliver its assessment of twin options for a 1,300km route from landlocked Uganda and Kenya's remote northwest by April. One version runs through Kenya to an as yet undeveloped port at Lamu, a proposal favoured by Nairobi, while the second runs south across the country, to Mombasa port, which Tullow says "could be much more cost-effective".

Either way, the three-year building project will cost about \$4bn. It is unclear who will fund the new pipeline, particularly if low prices persist.

Tullow says it will wait for the pipeline and has no plans to export in piecemeal fashion in the meantime, via alternatives such as trucking.

That is a blow for regional governments counting on oil windfalls to boost budgets and fund multibillion-dollar infrastructure projects including road, rail and ports.

Delhi residents might have been more forgiving if they felt Modi had delivered for them

When you have the corruption of a system, it's either 'somebody come and clean things up' or 'we want to participate'. Both are legitimate responses.

Campaigning in national elections last year, Mr Modi, then Gujarat's chief minister, presented himself as an outsider to Delhi's establishment — a humble tea-seller's son, waiting to cut through bureaucratic inertia and political gridlock to unleash India's long-stymied economic potential. Today, Mr Modi is the political establishment, known for top-down leadership, and the place where the buck stops. His ill-chosen suit seemed to epitomise his quick adoption of Delhi elites' habit of flaunting their power — the very "VIP culture" that AAP leaders revile — and have sworn to eradicate.

Delhi residents might have been more forgiving if they had felt Mr Modi had delivered for them. But few can point to any tangible improvements in their lives as a result of his ascent, and many are unhappy with the way rightwing Hindu groups — seeking to dictate lifestyle choices and marginalise minorities — seem emboldened under his administration. Today, it is the AAP that is firmly in the role of the transformative outsider. The party won 54 per cent of the local vote, having absorbed the traditional core support base of Congress. The AAP's idealism also captivated many first-time voters.

The AAP's challenge now will be to deliver results in Delhi while staying true to its core principles and reformist spirit. The AAP faces a long roadshow, and the final audience reaction is unknown.

But one thing is certain: do not expect the AAP's leading man to opt for a costume change any time soon.

amy.kazmin@ft.com

Potential boost to revenues and infrastructure fades as companies delay production

KATRINA MANSON — NAIROBI

Launching a university course to train future oil executives looks bold given the crash in global crude prices but Kenya is not counting itself out of the energy race yet.

"Bust cycles are the time to prepare the [industry] backbone," says Sumaya Hassan-Athmani, chief executive of the National Oil Corporation of Kenya, which on Tuesday launched a course to run at Nairobi's Strathmore University, to expand the "fairly small" pool of oil and gas talent in Kenya.

Hopeful investors have billed east Africa as the world's most promising frontier for oil and gas exploration for the past 10 years and there was good reason for their optimism: 2.5bn barrels of recoverable oil have been discovered in Uganda and Kenya; more than 50tn cubic feet of natural gas in Tanzania.

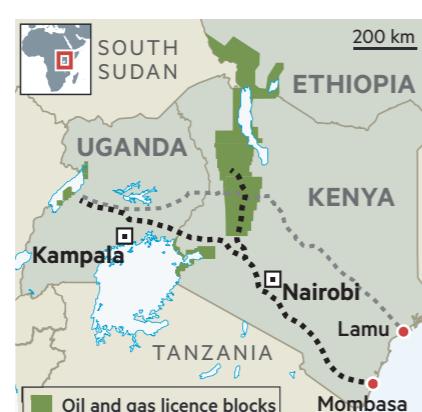
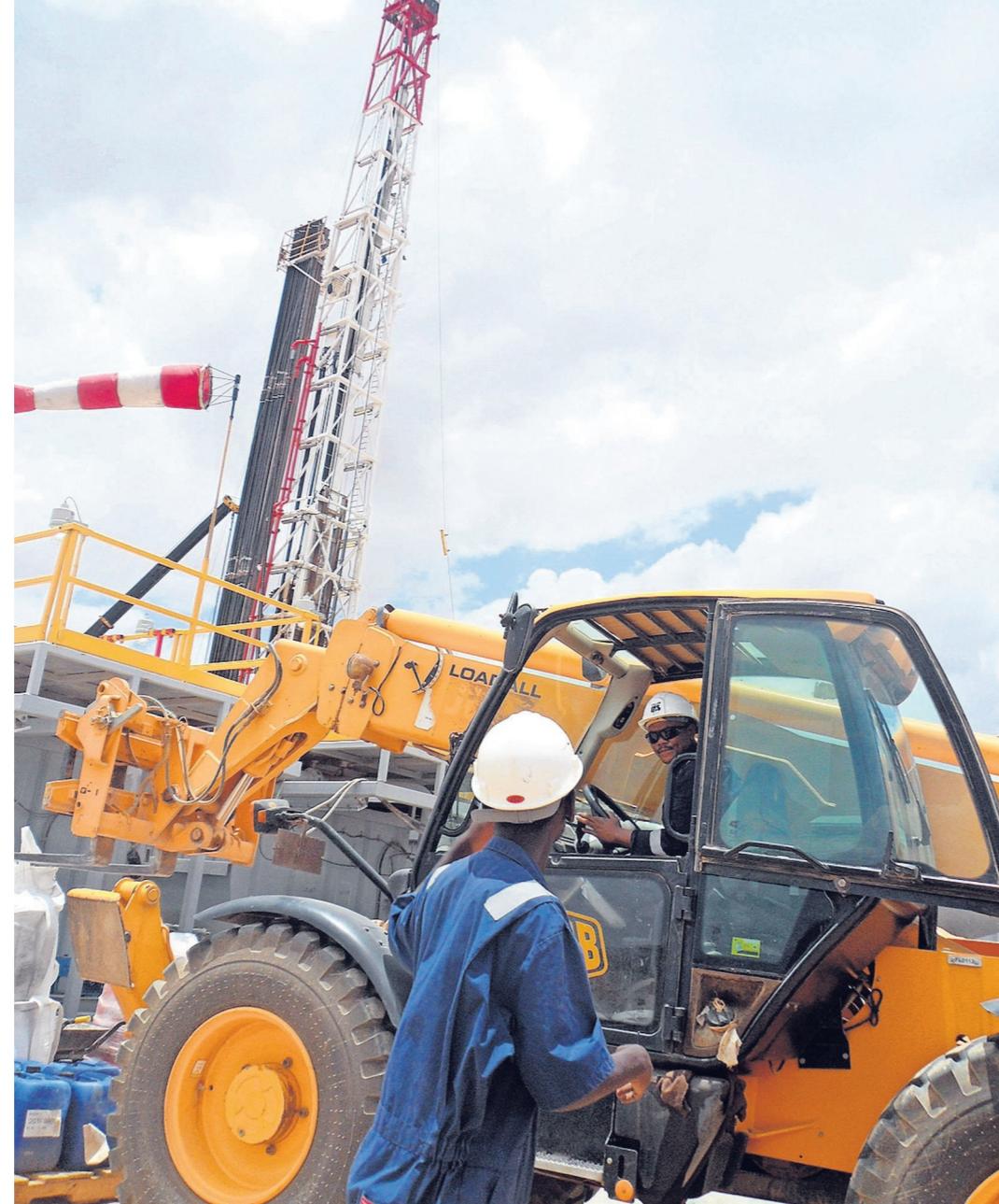
Once oil starts to flow, the potential benefits are huge "as long as Kenya doesn't repeat the mistakes of other Africa oil producers", says Apurva Sanghi, lead economist at the World Bank in Kenya.

"If they can get their legal and regulatory framework in place, including putting in place a sovereign wealth bill, oil will bring money for financing, especially for infrastructure, a reduced current account deficit and reduced pressure on the shilling [Kenya's currency] and [boost] growth."

But despite the first oil discovery in east Africa nine years ago, none of it has been commercially developed for export, no infrastructure exists to transport the waxy crude from remote drill sites, and regional oil executives are a rare species.

Now, the collapse in global prices threatens the industry before it has even got going. With exporters planning to delay production until prices rise, Kenya's institute of economic affairs warns that the country could lose \$720m in annual revenues for every year of delayed output.

The UK's Tullow Oil — the most bullish of east Africa's explorers, which dominates the hunt for oil in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia and is the only com-



pany to find any thus far — said on Wednesday it would reduce its rig count in Kenya from four to one this year.

Tullow has delayed what investors call the "final investment decision" by nearly two years, to late 2016, despite sitting on billions of barrels of reserves. The region's first oil exports are now unlikely until 2020 at the earliest.

Paul McDade, Tullow's chief operations officer, told the Financial Times that the company planned to make "an orderly closure" but would not reveal likely job loss figures until it had first spoken to its own workers. "We will

gradually wind them [the three rigs] down throughout the year; we've still allocated significant capital to Kenya [and plan to] continue exploration at a more modest pace as you'd expect with the oil price," Mr McDade said.

The picture is similar across the region. "The oil price is affecting everybody as explorers cut back on work," said one oil driller.

Junior companies with licences for the region's little-explored oil blocks may also come unstuck by failing to meet investment commitments required by their contracts with government.

"Investor sentiment is down and smaller guys are starting to look to ask government for an extension to their work programmes because they can't afford to meet them," said a blockholder who did not want to be named.

"There are a number of companies who have never had the amount of money they've needed from day one in east Africa — a lot of smaller companies who are just trying to look to flip the asset and sell chunks of the licences — they're hoping to hell that the crude price rebounds."

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Sanusi allegations

Nigeria says audit lays to rest claims over crude revenues

WILLIAM WALLIS — ABUJA
ANJLI RAVAL — LONDON

Nigeria's government has seized on an audit of the state oil company as it seeks to lay to rest allegations from a former central bank governor that billions of dollars in revenues from crude sales went missing during the oil boom.

President Goodluck Jonathan, whose campaign for re-election in delayed March 28 polls has been dogged by accusations that his government squandered windfall earnings when the oil price was high, received the report last week from PwC, the professional services group.

Although the audit has not been made public, Nigeria's auditor-general released selected findings implying that far less went unaccounted for than the \$20bn that Lamido Sanusi, then central bank governor, alleged that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) failed to remit between January 2012 and July 2013.

Mr Sanusi's allegations fed into one of the rockiest periods of Mr Jonathan's presidency and led to his suspension from the central bank. He is now Emir of Kano, an influential position among

Nigerian Muslims. Mr Sanusi said he had not seen the full audit, but that the "key findings" appeared to evade some of the questions he had asked.

Diezani Alison-Madueke, Nigeria's petroleum minister and current Opec president, who was put on the defensive by the claims, said the audit showed her to be " vindicated".

The summary of the forensic audit shows that the number of unpaid remittances stands at \$1.48bn, so we are keen to resolve this quickly. But in my view there is no amount that has disappeared," she said. The \$1.48bn related to royalties and taxes resulting from asset transfers between the NNPC and a subsidiary, she added.

According to the auditor-general, the PwC report found that the state oil company had remitted \$50.81bn out of a total of \$69.34bn in revenues from crude oil during the period under scrutiny. It had also spent \$5.32bn on petroleum subsidies, \$3.38bn on kerosene subsidies, with the remaining gap filled by operational costs.

Mr Sanusi provided evidence last year that the late president Umaru Yar'Adua had ordered an end to kerosene subsi-

dies in 2009. Data he provided also showed that nowhere in the country was kerosene sold at a subsidised rate. It was bought by the NNPC at about 49 naira but retailed at 170-250 naira, with the difference amounting to \$100m a month in "economic rent", he alleged.

He also questioned the legality of billions of dollars of deductions from revenues at the NNPC for petrol subsidies and implied that the group was import-

ting about twice what the nation used while supplying only half its fuel. The rest was supplied by private marketers. According to the auditor-general, PwC confirmed that the kerosene subsidies costs met by the NNPC had not been budgeted for in 2012 and 2013. PwC had recommended, he said, that "an official directive be written to support the legality of the kerosene subsidy costs".

But the selected findings did not appear to address the actual import volumes of petroleum on which subsidies were computed: one area of contention.

In an email, Mr Sanusi said that without knowing how PwC addressed these and other questions it was hard to draw conclusions. "My claim was always that these amounts were being withheld illegally and unconstitutionally, not that some explanation cannot be provided or conjured for what they were spent on," he said, adding: "Anyone can produce invoices."

Joseph Dawha, group managing director of NNPC, said the audit had "clearly vindicated our long-held position that the alleged unremitting crude oil revenue was a farce from day one".

Bombs, bullets and ballots page 11



Lamido Sanusi: says some findings appeared to evade questions

Ecology

Oceans soiled by 8m tonnes of plastic waste yearly, says study

CLIVE COOKSON — SAN JOSE

A staggering 8m tonnes of plastic waste are entering the oceans every year, the equivalent to five grocery bags filled with plastic for every foot (0.3 metres) of coastline in the world, according to the first scientific study of the problem.

The US-Australian survey, released at the American Association for the Advancement of Science annual meeting in San Jose, analysed waste production data from 192 countries to conclude that in 2010 between 4.8m and 12.7m tonnes of "mismanaged plastic" entered the oceans; 8m is the central estimate.

Plastic in the oceans is becoming a serious ecological problem for marine life, as well as an ugly pollutant washed up on beaches and floating on the open seas.

Large pieces such as intact plastic bags are a hazard to animals from turtles to dolphins, which can become entangled or swallow them with fatal results. More insidious is the weathering of plastic debris into tiny particles that

can be ingested even by microscopic invertebrates.

The study, which also appears in the journal *Science*, lists the world's 20 biggest national sources of mismanaged plastic waste. The top 19 are all middle and low-income countries, with the US in 20th position. The worst offenders are in Asia, with China responsible for 28 per cent of all mismanaged waste, followed by Indonesia, with 10 per cent.

The amounts of plastic going into the oceans are increasing fast, keeping pace with global plastic production, said study leader Jenna Jambeck of the University of Georgia.

"In 2025 the annual input would be about twice the 2010 input or 10 bags full per foot of coastline," she said. "The cumulative input in 2025 would be nearly 20 times our 2010 estimate: 100 bags of plastic per foot of coastline."

A huge investment will be needed to save the oceans and their inhabitants from choking on plastic debris. "Solutions will require a combination of local and global efforts," said Prof Jambeck.

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GIORGIO ARMANI

FT BIG READ. NIGERIA

A six-week poll delay has raised fears of renewed army meddling in politics, but many Nigerians are again looking to a former general to deliver the improved security and economy the country needs.

By William Wallis

The billboards bearing Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan's campaign slogan – "continuity" – are plastered everywhere, from ramshackle stores to shopping malls.

For members of the business community who have placed big bets on Mr Jonathan's administration in the five years since his accidental rise to power, continuity must have a reassuring ring. Otherwise, it seems an odd choice of word for the times.

Elections in Africa's most populous nation have never been for the faint-hearted. They almost always trigger violence. Pitting two strongly contrasting candidates – the incumbent, a southern Christian and former zoology lecturer from the restive, oil producing Niger delta, against Muhammadu Buhari, an ascetic former military ruler and a Muslim from the north – these are gearing up to be especially rough.

Originally scheduled for tomorrow but now postponed by six weeks, the campaign has played out against the backdrop of an escalating, Islamist insurgency, financial turmoil resulting from the falling price of oil – on which the state depends for around 70 per cent of revenues – and now fears of an impending constitutional crisis.

Boko Haram extremists have massacred several thousand people since the start of the year, extending their control over a swath of territory in the impoverished northeast and threatening the regional capital, Maiduguri.

It is a uniquely ominous set of circumstances that is partly self-inflicted and partly beyond Mr Jonathan's control. But it is hard to find many Nigerians who would enthusiastically endorse more of the same.

"If you wanted to create a perfect storm in Nigeria, this is how you would set it up," says a senior government official. "We are facing an existential national crisis and yet we are not able to mobilise and come together," he adds, lamenting the lack of unity to confront the jihadi threat and tackle the consequences of the oil price shock.

At stake is the continued transformation of Africa's leading economy – among the fastest growing in the world over the past 15 years – and in the most extreme scenario, Nigeria's ability to hold together as one nation.

General Buhari is a throwback to a different era. He joined the army in the 1960s when Nigeria was descending into civil war and imposed a "war on indiscipline" after taking power in a coup and serving briefly as military head of state



Power struggle

Regime under threat: the aftermath of a car bomb in Gombe, northeast Nigeria, on February 2. President Goodluck Jonathan had just left a rally in a nearby stadium

Afolabi Sotunde/Reuters

neutral observers sensed was unstoppable momentum when on Saturday the Independent National Electoral Commission delayed elections to March 28.

"He got a boost from the way we managed the primaries. But since then it has become as much an "anything but Jonathan" movement as it is a pro-Buhari one," says Mr Fayemi.

Jonathan's challenge

Mr Jonathan won comfortably against Gen Buhari in 2011 elections, after rising to the job on the death of his predecessor. He was perceived as a breath of fresh air – the first president to come from a minority group in the Niger Delta region which produces the oil wealth.

His government took some bold reform steps, privatising the electricity sector in an attempt to tackle chronic deficits, tackling fraud in the distribution of fertiliser and, in 2011, attempting but failing in the face of protests, to eliminate the fuel subsidy – another source of multibillion-dollar fraud.

He has lost much of the goodwill

since, and is perceived now even by some allies as lacking authority, clumsy in his handling of the insurgency and unfazed by alarming levels of profligacy within government circles.

Facing a growing protest vote, he has had some tricky moments on the campaign trail. At some rallies he was booed and heckled. In some northern states his convoy was stoned.

According to one younger official, there were the beginnings of panic in the ruling party. Some senior officials were contemplating exile. Funds meant for the PDP election campaign were finding their way offshore. Some members of Mr Jonathan's administration have reason to be afraid that a government led by Gen Buhari would come after them and their money.

Attahiru Jega, the electoral commission chairman, postponed the polls under strong pressure from security chiefs, who told him they were unable to guarantee safety while simultaneously launching a fresh military campaign against Boko Haram.

The delay should allow for the distribution of biometric voter cards to millions of voters who were at risk of being disenfranchised. But in part because of the antecedents – the military regime in 1993 annulled the vote when the "wrong" candidate won – many Nigerians see these legitimate concerns as pretexts conjured up by the administration to forestall defeat.

Now, there are growing fears among opposition and civil society activists that the government may seek to extend its mandate beyond a four-year term ending on May 29, or risk plunging the country back into the hands of the military rather than allow the retired general to win.

"Having used [the security forces] to



Given the size of its economy – which after a revision of data overtook South Africa's last year as the continent's largest – a major democratic reversal, or sustained outbreak of violence along regional or religious lines would have far-reaching repercussions.

"So much of the 'Africa rising' narrative is tied up in the idea that better governance allowed for improved economic outcomes," says Razia Khan, chief economist for Africa at Standard Chartered. "From the 1990s, we did see that perhaps most meaningfully in Nigeria's own emergence from its military past."

"[But] a more severe threat to the elections in Nigeria would shake the foundations on which the belief that Africa will continue to pull ahead rests," he adds.

The next six weeks will be nerve-racking. The extra time allows the president's party an opportunity to regroup. Officials are studying the electoral map and readying an infusion of cash and muscle to smooth relations in key states. But with the ruling party facing a strong, national opposition with growing momentum it is unclear whether it can turn the tide. Indeed, many Buhari supporters in the north believe they have already won.

Meanwhile in the Niger delta, many of Mr Jonathan's supporters feel strongly that he is entitled to a second term. Former warlords from the days when the oil producing region was in conflict have threatened openly to take up arms again should he lose.

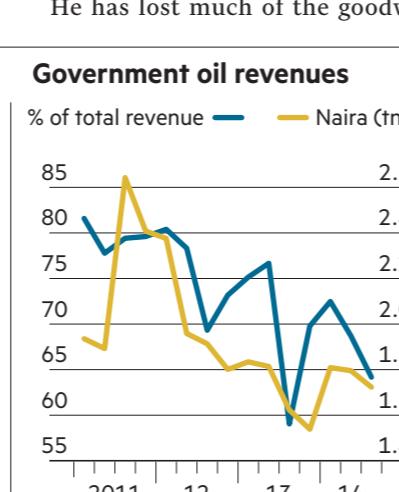
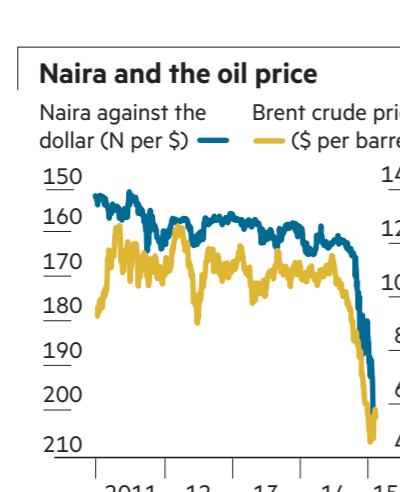
No outcome is likely to be entirely smooth. But the potential for unrest in the north, where millions feel they have yet to feel the dividends of civilian rule, is probably greater, and more dangerous, given the opportunity that would provide for the insurgents of Boko Haram. Since the dawn of black majority rule in 1994 South Africa, there has rarely been so much hanging on an African election.

Speed read

National crisis Goodluck Jonathan is presiding over a perfect storm of circumstances that is partly self-inflicted and partly beyond his control

Extremist role Boko Haram could stop Buhari supporters from voting in the northeast and may prefer the more convenient enemy than a former general, popular among Muslims, whose main mission is to rebuild the army.

Financial fears Investors have been worried about the impact of falling crude prices – as well as claims of missing billions in oil revenues



Sources: Thomson Reuters Datastream; Haver Analytics

Constitution Candidates must appeal to all regions and ethnicities

Winning a Nigerian election requires more than a simple lead. The successful candidate must also garner 25 per cent of the vote in two-thirds of the 36 states in the federation.

This constitutional provision was introduced to safeguard against a presidency held with only narrow regional or ethnic support. But it is only in 2015 that it has become such a critical factor. In the past three polls, the ruling People's Democratic party had the machinery to muscle support from across the multi-ethnic federation. This time there are reasons to doubt whether either main candidate can win the required numbers nationwide to avoid a run-off.

This is partly because of the unique way in which Goodluck Jonathan, a southern Christian who rose to power from the position of vice-president on the death of Umaru Yar'Adua, his northern, Muslim predecessor. His incumbency has upset an unwritten rule within the PDP that the presidency should rotate between north and south. As a result, he and the ruling party have lost support among northern Muslims.

Meanwhile the defection to the opposition All Progressives Congress of several state governors has evened out control of patronage at state level.

Rivals:
Muhammadu
Buhari, left,
and Goodluck
Jonathan, right

Mr Jonathan's strongest base is in the southeast and south-south, but the 11 states in those regions do not have the numbers to win a presidential vote. His challenge is to secure enough support among Muslims and minority Christians in the north and centre to fulfil the constitutional requirement, while also taking chunks from opposition

strongholds in the populous Yoruba-speaking southwest. The challenge for the main challenger, General Muhammadu Buhari, is the reverse. He is forecast to win a landslide in his home northwest and take a big slice of the southwest. But he still needs 25 per cent of votes in some other southern states where hostility to him is strongest.

Islamist insurgents potentially hold the balance. They could prevent more than a million of Gen Buhari's supporters from voting in the northeast, their stronghold. For Boko Haram a southern Christian unpopular in the north is a more convenient enemy than a former general, popular among Muslims, whose main mission is to rebuild the army.





FINANCIAL TIMES

'Without fear and without favour'

FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2015

Carney makes promises of a return to normality

Given the BOE's lopsided toolkit, rising inflation is still the lesser evil

Do you want the good news or the good news? Elsewhere in Europe falling prices are brewing a headache for the monetary authorities. Not so for Mark Carney, the governor of the Bank of England, whose time at the helm has been placid by the standards of modern central bankers.

On the release of the BoE's latest inflation report, the governor might have found it a pleasant task to explain why he missed his inflation target by as much as 1.5 percentage points. His letter to the chancellor argued that weak British prices not be confused with the debilitating deflation that alarms his European peers. Indeed, price falls are a bonus, having given workers their first real terms pay rise in years.

Even better, today's failure may help make tomorrow's job easier. The boost to spending from real wage growth should help inflation return smoothly to target and the economy continue to expand. Even weekly wage growth, the most stubborn variable of the recovery, is forecast soon to return to 3.5 per cent. All this should let Mr Carney lift interest rates off the floor within a year, and usher in a return to normality.

It is easy to look over past inflation reports to pour scorn on such optimism. Last year, the possibility of outright price falls was given a mere 2 per cent probability; now it looks like an even bet. In the past the Bank was also too quick to predict a return to normal pay rises. But Mr Carney employs economists, not soothsayers, and had no way of forecasting the collapse in energy prices that brought this about.

As for normality being around the corner, this is what the Bank is charged with bringing about. If Mr Carney had instead forecast inflation failing to return to target, he would in effect be admitting an intention not to do his job properly.

Yet this rosy future still inspires a

sense of unreality. By the time of Mr Carney's next report, British voters will have gone to the polls. Any number of outcomes might emerge, from a minority Labour government to a continuation of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat set-up. A Tory-led government would cut public sector pay and benefits while Labour would ease up on austerity by up to £50bn. The consequences for wages and the broader economy would be significant; for example, it is hard to see pay growth returning to normal levels while public sector wages – a sixth of the total – are frozen.

Overseas events may also disturb this picture. Mr Carney cited the small exposure of British banks to Greece as reason to be relaxed about "Grexit". But given the weak state of the EU economy, by far Britain's biggest trading partner, such buoyancy could easily be misplaced.

Outside its comforting central scenario, the inflation report can resemble a 50-page exercise in explaining how anything can happen. Mr Carney cannot comment on electoral results or predict whether the euro will break up, and sensibly remains open both to raising or lowering interest rates.

But such symmetry is misleading. In economic terms Britain resembles a car with brakes in mint condition but just one engine cylinder firing. Given a weak EU trading partner and the UK's habitual reliance on spending by indebted households, Mr Carney's options for pepping up demand are both weak and uncertain. Yet he has unlimited means of restraining growth should he need to, including a £375bn portfolio of bonds to sell. Given the tools at his disposal and the balance of risks ahead, he needs to see fast actual wage growth before he taps on the brakes. It is not enough just to believe that good times are around the corner.

Stop the mudslinging and focus on closing loophole

Sir, British MPs from all parties should focus on closing tax loopholes used by the rich to reduce their tax liabilities, rather than engaging in more mindless mudslinging and parliamentary pantomime ("Miliband seeks to entangle Tory donors in HSBC tax evasion row", February 12). The challenge is that political parties need to find new and clever ways to bribe voters, often through so-called "tax giveaways", especially just before an election. At the same time, to varying degrees, all the main parties rely on a wealthy elite for political donations. Thus, the parliamentary democratic model perpetuates complexity and the status quo – so, on average, the rich continue to pay a lower marginal rate of tax than the rest of the population.

One way to achieve greater tax compliance – and tax equality – would be to reduce the UK's grossly elongated tax legislation. Currently more than 13,000 pages, it is comfortably the longest, most labyrinthine tax code in the world. Notwithstanding the ongoing revelations about tax evasion by the rich, UK tax law contains more holes than a good Swiss cheese.

There were only 10 Commandments for a reason: simple rules work, they are transparent and easy to follow. The challenge, for a party-dominated political system riddled with vested interests, is that simplifying tax, and legislation more generally, would ultimately remove the need for many of the 650 MPs frantically jockeying to justify their existence.

James Anderson
PAM Insight,
Geneva, Switzerland

HMRC and a counter-intuitive concept

Sir, At university in the 1960s, I first came across the fascinating and to some extent counter-intuitive economic concept of the margin, a powerful aid and guide to radical thinking. It should be applied to the current debate about the under-collection of taxes by HM Revenue & Customs.

Some years ago, it became accepted policy that HMRC should not be spared from a programme of public expenditure cuts, including the laying off of many senior tax inspectors. I think that it is a fair assumption to make from recent revelations that, as

unification cost, but \$2tn seems a good guess. In that context, western dithering over a few tens of billions of dollars pending implementation of their structural adjustment elixirs seems like whistling in the wind. A real programme of western support for Ukraine sufficient to prise the country loose from Russia's cold war embrace will need a lot more money, organisation and policy innovation than anyone has even begun to contemplate as yet.

Robert Johnston

New York, NY, US

Sir, Martin Wolf assumes that Russia's leaders are motivated in Ukraine by fear of having a stable and prosperous

democracy on their doorstep, and so will keep destabilising it unless stopped by western force or sanctions ("Help Ukraine seize this chance", February 11). The west has an overwhelming moral and political obligation to provide Kiev with very large funding to help it achieve a stable and prosperous democracy, in the face of Russia's bullying.

This diagnosis of Russia's motivation is questionable. Russia's big fear is having a hostile military alliance on its doorstep, an alliance whose core rationale has long been hostility towards Russia. The fear is all the more justified in Russia's eyes by the US failure to honour its earlier commitment that Nato and the EU

would not march up to Russia's national frontiers.

The ingredients of a peace settlement are clear: first, international guarantees that Ukraine will not join Nato; second, fuller self-government of eastern provinces where people of Russian culture are in the large majority (the Scottish devolution model?); third, more or less free trade between Ukraine and Russia, including the eastern provinces; fourth, no Russian military units in Ukraine.

Until this deal is agreed the west should not provide the funding Mr Wolf calls for.

Robert H Wade
Dept of International Development,
London School of Economics, UK

Lords report reflects the concerns of many

Sir, Your editorial "Britain's House of Lords needs to be downsized" (February 11), referring to the recent report of the Constitution Unit at University College London on the size of the House of Lords, crystallises concerns shared by many current members. The quality of Lords' debates can be undermined by factors such as limits on speaking time and space in the chamber. So the projected membership figures quoted in the report would not only be reputationally damaging but also physically impractical.

The report asks party leaders to commit to overhauling the appointments system and to arrive at a cap on numbers. But whatever happens in the future, the opportunity to retire presented by last year's reform act should not now be disregarded pending further changes. This is why I will continue to encourage a tradition in the House of regarding retirement at the right time as a public duty – as valuable to the House as each member's contribution in the chamber.

Baroness D'Souza
The Lord Speaker

'Greenbelt' is not what the name suggests

Sir, The original purpose of the greenbelt was to "prevent the coalescence of settlements" and not to protect the countryside. The misnomer has caused much confusion.

About 40 years ago, I attended a site meeting in Staffordshire with a client and numerous other professional advisers, to look at land that had been suggested for potential development as a hypermarket. One boundary was formed by a high embankment along which ran a railway line. Opposite that was a lower embankment carrying an A road. One part of the site was occupied by a derelict property. Across the middle of the land was a line of pylons.

When the developer asked for comments, the planning expert responded. "Well," he said, "this is of course a greenbelt site."

Harvey Cole
Winchester, Hants, UK

Don't tease, Mr Thomson

Sir, What a tease Adam Thomson is! Or perhaps this is some pre-Valentine's day covert gesture, writing about a secret list of 20 Parisian restaurants that are currently off radar? ("Bitter times for French haute cuisine", Paris Notebook, February 11.) I do hope he will share the details in subsequent columns. I am grateful to Nicolas Lander for pointing out gems such as Honey & Co in London and, best of all, American-run Spring, which is in Paris. I look forward to hearing much more.

Sarah Dudney

London SE24, UK

COMMENT ON FT.COM

The Exchange
Ian Bremmer on how President Barack Obama bumbled into the right policy on Syria

blogs.ft.com/the-exchange

A tactical pause in Putin's assault on Ukraine

The west should not assume that the pact agreed in Minsk will last

The deal agreed by Vladimir Putin and Petro Poroshenko in Minsk yesterday provides a ray of hope that the conflict in eastern Ukraine might be moving towards a settlement. But it would be foolish to view the pact more optimistically than that. After a testy 16-hour negotiation, the Russian and Ukrainian presidents have at least settled on a framework to end the fighting that has taken more than 5,000 lives. However, a similar agreement signed in the Belarusian capital in September swiftly collapsed. And any optimism about Minsk II requires a leap of faith that Mr Putin has suddenly become serious about repairing his relations with Ukraine and the west.

Central to the deal is a ceasefire that comes into force on February 15. It would create a demilitarised corridor separating Ukrainian and pro-Russian forces by up to 140km. As ever, there are plenty of loose ends that provide pretexts for renewed conflict should Mr Putin choose to blow hot again. For instance, the text allows for two more days of fighting and two weeks for the pullback of heavy weapons. The status of surrounded Ukrainian troops in the strategically important town of Debaltseve is worryingly unclear.

Even if both sides put an end to hostilities, that still leaves the problem of finding a more lasting settlement. yesterday's pact sketches the outlines of a comprehensive political deal that would see Kiev devolving power to the pro-Russian regions of Donetsk and Lugansk. And here, too, there is much that Mr Putin can exploit to his own advantage if he so desires.

The deal appears to offer some sops to Mr Poroshenko. It talks about Kiev "decentralising" power to the rebel-held regions, a word that is weaker than the full-blooded "federalisation" that Moscow has hitherto demanded. Donetsk and Lugansk would have their

own police and legal systems. But they would not have a veto over Ukraine's foreign and defence policies, meaning they could not be a pro-Kremlin bulwark against Kiev eventually joining the EU or even Nato.

But these wins pale against the significant concessions that Mr Poroshenko has been forced to make. Russia has never acknowledged that it has troops on Ukrainian soil and the deal sets no timetable for the departure. Nor does it immediately allow Kiev to recover control of its borders with Russia, which has been sending heavy weapons and military personnel across them with impunity. It allows Ukraine to begin re-establishing such control at the end of 2015 – and even then only after the constitutional settlement has been agreed. This is a big step backwards from Minsk I, when Kiev's control of its own borders was not subject to material preconditions.

The Minsk II agreement will only succeed if Mr Putin has decided to tone down his confrontation with Ukraine and the west. But there is no sign he is willing to do so. Many factors, including Russia's economic crisis and the ferocious anti-western campaign now being waged in the Russia media, suggest that the Kremlin leader's ambitions stretch beyond Ukraine and that he strives to reassess a Russian sphere of influence in eastern Europe.

Throughout this crisis, Mr Putin has frequently switched back and forth between the deployment of military force and last-minute diplomacy in order to pursue his goals. It would be wise to assume that Minsk II is little more than a tactical pause. Even now, the west should be contemplating a range of responses – including extending sanctions on Moscow and providing defensive military assistance to Kiev – in anticipation of Mr Putin's next act of aggression.

Excuse me while I misremember my career highlights

Notebook
by Robert Shrimley



Like the embattled and now suspended NBC news anchor Brian Williams, I have never been in a helicopter that has been hit by a rocket-propelled grenade over Iraq. Unlike Williams, I have always regarded that as a good thing.

I dare say that, had I been in a helicopter hit by an RPG and survived, I might well have enjoyed telling my RPG story – but not as much as I would have enjoyed not being hit by the grenade in the first place, and certainly not as much as I would have enjoyed not having to deal with the moments of blind terror and panicky flashbacks that followed. I do, however, know that in recounting my tale I would have been a model of courage under fire because "you don't really have time to think about fear when it is actually happening", Dave.

As it happens, I do not have any great combat stories to tell as I have devoted much time to avoiding war zones. Indeed my greatest war story is about how I escaped being sent to El Salvador. It is not very noble but at least I am still here to tell it.

Williams has apologised for "misremembering" the incident. He had been in the helicopter convoy but it was the one in front that was hit. Well, they do say the devil is in the detail. He has now been suspended for six months and few expect his return. The comedian, Jon Stewart, quipped that Williams was perhaps the first man to be held accountable for lying about the war in Iraq.

It does occur to me now, however,

that a failure to misremember more of my own professional highlights could be one of my big career mistakes. It isn't that I have been unsuccessful but maybe I should have misremembered more if I wanted to make it to the top. I have now begun misremembering my seminal role in Margaret Thatcher's downfall, and am starting to misrecall my part in the Profumo affair – which, given my key involvement, could hardly have taken place the year before I was born. I may even go all out and misremember

Land for pointing out gems such as Honey & Co in London and, best of all, American-run Spring, which is in Paris. I look forward to hearing much more.

Sarah Dudney

London SE24, UK

anecdote level. Today's anchors are often there more for their telegenic qualities than their journalistic credentials.

Williams is not unique in this. Many successful men seem to feel the need for a more competitive anecdote. Already undisputed alpha males just can't help pointlessly wishing to be that little bit more alpha.

This habit is not restricted to journalists. Tony Blair once recalled running away from school and sneaking on to a flight to the Bahamas, only to be caught just before take-off. He had indeed fled school, but there were no flights to the Bahamas from the airport he named. There was no reason to make it up but simply being homesick was not heroic enough. He was also caught out when he talked of watching a footballer he was too young to have seen live. It was not enough to have been to a game, he had to have seen the team's most famous player.

Although this trait seems largely male, Hillary Clinton merits a special mention for the phantom sniper fire she dodged in Bosnia.

Perhaps it is the need to be the most interesting guy in the room. Or maybe they feel such a sense of destiny that nothing about them can be allowed to be ordinary: man of history meets false memory syndrome.

Incidentally, have I ever told you about my role in the Watergate investigation? I have long felt it hasn't had the attention it deserved.

robert.shrimley@ft.com

Letters

Email: letters.editor@ft.com or
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7873 5938
Include daytime telephone number and full address
Corrections: corrections@ft.com

How much will it cost to rebuild western Ukraine?

Sir, As the western democracies "huff and puff" over how to respond to Russian clandestine forces alongside local rebels in eastern Ukraine, cold war history is clear that Martin Wolf's call for the "transformation of Ukraine into a stable and prosperous democracy" is the only policy that can turn the tide, and that "the starting point has to be the economy" ("Help Ukraine seize this chance", February 11). But how much will it cost and where will the money come from?

Following what appears to be an inevitable partition, western Ukraine will, for all practical purposes, have to be rebuilt from scratch. There are various estimates of how much the rebuilding of East Germany under

unification cost, but \$2tn seems a good guess. In that context, western dithering over a few tens of billions of dollars pending implementation of their structural adjustment elixirs seems like whistling in the wind. A real programme of western support for Ukraine sufficient to prise the country loose from Russia's cold war embrace will need a lot more money, organisation and policy innovation than anyone has even begun to contemplate as yet.

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democracy on their doorstep, and so will keep destabilising it unless stopped by western force or sanctions ("Help Ukraine seize this chance", February 11). The west has an overwhelming moral and political obligation to provide Kiev with very large funding to help it achieve a stable and prosperous democracy, in the face of Russia's bullying.

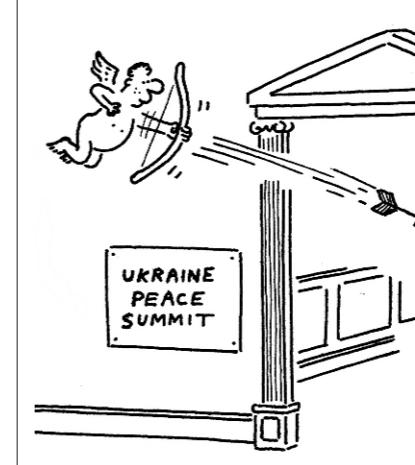
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Robert H Wade
Dept of International Development,
London School of Economics, UK



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Comment

The British tech industry needs a homegrown cash boost

FINANCE

Gillian Tett



This week Boris Johnson, mayor of London, has been banging his drum in New York. He is not, however, promoting his ideas about Europe, the Conservative party or Winston Churchill, the subject of his latest book.

Instead, Mr Johnson is doing the cyber version of taking coals to Newcastle: telling American tech entrepreneurs that London is a cool place to work and invest. Never mind Silicon Valley or New York's Dumbo (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass); US entrepreneurs and investors should head to Shoreditch and Bournemouth. Or so Mr Johnson's sales pitch goes.

It is something of a quixotic mission but is nevertheless notable for at least

two reasons. First, it offers a useful reminder of how fashions in the political economy can change. A decade or so ago, when British trade missions tried to "sell" London to New York, they talked more about banks than computer bytes. Back then, people such as Ed Balls, when he was a Treasury minister, were keen to extol London's light touch, "principles-based" regulation as a competitive advantage versus New York.

These days no British politician wants to talk too much about banks, or wave a light touch regulatory regime as a lure. Memories of the 2008 crisis are too painful. Instead, the politically correct message for politicians is to extol the digital start-up scene. These companies are often small and create relatively few jobs – although the bigger tech picture is good, with a report this month suggesting that the tech industry in London employs more than 250,000 people (against almost 350,000 in financial services in Greater London). This is cheering.

The second reason why Mr Johnson's visit is striking is that it inadvertently shows the distortions that still haunt the

financial world. In some ways – as the British trade team point out – London has attractive features for entrepreneurs. It is, for example, a truly international centre and the government is (belatedly) trying to make the visa regime more liberal. British officials told New Yorkers this week that some visas will be provided for the employees of digital start-ups and they promised to

Silicon Valley is now so crowded – and overvalued – that there is growing appetite to look overseas

fast track other applications. British labour costs are lower than those in San Francisco, say, and there is scientific innovation aplenty spreading out to the regions outside London. Cultural attitudes towards entrepreneurship are becoming more welcoming. Tech clusters are emerging, too.

But the rub, as so often outside the US, is cash. If you look at the raw data in iso-

lation, the trajectory seems cheering. Last year \$1.4bn worth of new funding was invested in digital ventures in London, while \$2.1bn was invested across the UK as a whole. That is twice the level of 2013 – and, strikingly, 20 times higher than five years ago.

Half of that money was supplied by US venture firms, such as Accel Partners and Union Square Capital. The Silicon Valley-based Andreessen Horowitz, for example, recently put \$58m into a financial technology company called TransferWise. Indeed, foreign direct investment (FDI) into London is now rising faster than in Berlin and New York, according to Gerard Grech, chief executive of Tech City UK.

But the sums remain modest compared with the US. Since 2012, American venture capital companies have invested around \$70bn in Silicon Valley and \$160bn overall, according to the National Venture Capital Association. Last year, several billion of this went to New York.

The real issue for London tech companies is not so much finding seed capital but the finance to enable successful

businesses to scale up. London-based companies can only dream of having even a fraction of the type of financial power of a company such as Uber.

Of course, if you are an optimist – as the bouncy Mr Johnson undoubtedly is – you can argue that this change will come. The Silicon Valley tech scene is now so crowded and overvalued that there is growing appetite among US investors to look overseas.

And European investors are desperate for productive places to put their cash; this is a region, after all, where \$2 trillion-worth of bonds have negative yields. The continent's banks are also keen to jump on the bandwagon.

But the fact that half the start-up money raised in 2014 was from America, not Europe, shows the challenge. London financiers are better at devising complex derivatives trades than organising a sensible way to fund entrepreneurs on the scale that is needed. If Mr Johnson's mission to New York helps to change this, he will deserve a rousing cheer. But it will be a slog.

gillian.tett@ft.com

Europe's refugee crisis is an economic opportunity lost

OPINION

Charlotte Harford

It once looked like an enlightened reform – but that was hard to remember this week as the Italian coast guard plucked dozens of refugees from frigid Mediterranean waters only to watch many die of hypothermia before the rescue boat could reach shore. Hundreds more are believed to have drowned. The Dublin convention, agreed 25 years ago to ensure asylum seekers were treated humanely wherever in Europe they arrived, is compounding the humanitarian crisis on the EU's borders.

Asylum seekers who made it to Europe used to spend years being shunted back and forth between EU states that could not agree who should take responsibility for them. The 1990 convention put an end to that, requiring new arrivals to lodge a claim as soon as they reached the EU (and obliging the country in question to process it). Adults had their fingerprints stored on a database, providing definitive proof of where they first showed up.

The intentions were noble but everything hinged on sharing responsibility fairly across the EU. Instead, Italy has been bearing the burden of providing the first level of assistance to new arrivals reaching Europe from north Africa, with no meaningful help from the rest of the continent. The authorities have provided medical care and food with some efficiency, augmented by the generosity of local communities and charities. But Italy has not been able to provide accommodation for more than a fraction of the newcomers, many of whom sleep on the streets. Two winters ago,

Left to cool their heels in Italy, migrants impose a heavy cost – when they could instead be an asset

two Somali refugees sleeping in an underpass in Rome died of asphyxiation in their sleep from the fumes of the newspapers they had been burning to keep warm. Italy needs help.

Most of the human cost of the world's upheavals is borne not by Europe but by countries far less able to cope, such as Lebanon, Jordan and Kenya. Yet the cold shoulder shown to those arriving from the Middle East and Africa today contrasts with western feting of refugees from eastern Europe in the 1980s.

Those arguing that Europe simply cannot absorb the number of incomers arriving now cannot be dismissed out of hand; there are too many of them for that, and they carry too much influence.

But it is hard to believe that the right approach is to spend millions on security operations aimed at keeping migrants out of Europe as if they were some kind of Vandal horde. The typical refugee arriving in Italy via north Africa is young, motivated and tough enough to withstand a harrowing journey. Their intended destination suggests a soft spot for democracy and the rule of law. Some are highly educated and many have a real affection for our culture, even if they have an imperfect knowledge of it.

Among those the EU is struggling to repel, then, are people of the kind that western employers often struggle to attract. Ireland, for example, has been crying out for skilled workers.

The most urgent need is to expand the search-and-rescue component of the EU's Triton sea-patrol mission for those migrants who find themselves in trouble en route to Italy. Once the refugees arrive, an important way to relieve the country of its burden would be to help them find their way to places where they have an opportunity to thrive. The logic is economic as well as humanitarian. Left to cool their heels in Italy, refugees impose a heavy cost. Provided with training, education and help to resettle in countries with labour shortages, they could instead be an asset.

The difficulties of this approach should not be underestimated. But this issue is not going to go away. And just as allowing migrants to drown in the Mediterranean is unconscionable, and leaving Jordan, Lebanon and Kenya (and to a lesser extent Italy) to absorb the outflows is unfair (as well as unworkable in the long term), so failing to offer training and education to those who could benefit from it is short-sighted. It is time to think creatively.

The writer is a former diplomat who lives and works in Italy

Guns are only half an answer for Ukraine

GLOBAL POLITICS

Philip Stephens



Slavia locked in the military advantage of the Serbs. As the Bosnians were cut down, the west was split about whether to exempt them from the ban. Then, as now, US and Europe had resolved to keep their own forces out of the fight.

The Bosnians, one side argued, had the right of self-defence. If the west stood back, the least it could do was even up the fight. Bosnia, after all, had been recognised by the UN as a sovereign state. Slobodan Milosevic's Serbia had no incentive to come to the negotiating table while it was advancing on the battlefield. So ethics and realpolitik gave the same answer.

On the other side many said that arming the Bosnians would simply level up the killing field. The Serbs would step up their attacks and new weaponry would dissuade the Bosnians from negotiating. And could the west draw such a neat line between arming Bosnia and sending in its own forces? What about mission creep? This side too claimed to be on the side of ethical realism.

The parallels with Ukraine, of course, are inexact. Mr Putin's Russia is not Milosevic's Serbia. Some of the actors have swapped roles. If Ms Merkel is now a peacenik, her predecessor-but-one Helmut Kohl called in 1993 for the Bosnian embargo to be lifted. The US president Bill Clinton backed sending arms before later changing his mind. Britain and France, which had contributed to a UN peacekeeping force, led the opposition. Anticipating Ms Merkel's words in Munich, John Major, the then British prime minister, said lifting the ban



would be a "counsel of despair" calculated to widen the conflict.

For all the differences, the question asked of the west is much the same. European security depends on territorial inviolability. If states can expand their borders by invading neighbours we are back to a Hobbesian world of the early 20th century. The security guarantees offered in the Budapest memorandum in return for Kiev's surrender of nuclear weapons were unequivocal. Russia's revanchism reaches beyond Ukraine. But how far will the US and Europe go to defend the postwar order?

Not too far, says Ms Merkel. Her diplomacy collides with private acknowledgment that Mr Putin will not give up what he calls Novorossiya. The most likely outcome of this week's

agreement in Minsk is a temporary lull. The name of the German game is to halt Russia's advance, setting the Donbass alongside South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Transnistria as a frozen conflict. The west must be patient, she says, just as during the cold war. The oil price collapse and sanctions will take their toll. To provide Kiev with weapons would invite Moscow to escalate the conflict.

The riposte is that the west has a duty to help Ukraine defend itself. To surrender to Mr Putin's land grab would be to encourage his revanchism. A better equipped Ukrainian military would change the calculus in Moscow. Sure, Mr Putin could send in an army division, but at the cost of heavy casualties and an end to the threadbare pretence of a western conspiracy to encircle Russia.

I lean towards this second course. Mr Putin sees the west as decadent and weak. The message from Munich was that Moscow inhabits a parallel universe. Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, attracted audible derision as he rehashed the tired narrative that the Ukraine crisis is all the fault of US-

sponsored fascists. Faced with such self-serving fantasy a line has to be drawn.

It should be understood, though, that arming Ukraine is at best half an answer. Modern defensive weaponry will not overturn the military facts on the ground in Donbass. Ukraine alone cannot defeat the Russian army. The lessons from the Balkans are salutary. The UN embargo was left in place and the slaughter continued apace. Milosevic was forced to the negotiating table by direct Nato intervention after the Serbian massacre of civilians at Srebrenica. President Barack Obama is not about to send US warplanes to Ukraine.

In one respect Ms Merkel is right. The west should play a long game: maintaining sanctions for as long as Russian forces occupy Crimea and the Donbass and providing financial and other resources on a scale sufficient to see what is left of Ukraine emerge as a successful, democratic state. My question is a simple one: does the German chancellor have the patience and resolve?

philip.stephens@ft.com

Politicians who put on an act can expect little applause

OPINION

Jonathan Powell

Election season is in full swing and political messages are being pumped at us from all directions. Prominent politicians, including George Osborne, chancellor, go to great lengths to affect "everyman" estuary English rather using the cut-glass accent more common two decades ago. But they do not use everyday language to convey these messages. Instead they use words that have been exhaustively tested in focus groups – which is why both sides repeatedly say they are on the side of "hard working families" rather than "ordinary people".

This code is the result of the professionalisation of politics, along with the import of US techniques such as the use of electronic instant-response "dials" in focus groups that allow participants to reflect their reaction second by second

to politicians' words. Advisers look for emotional rather than intellectual reactions. It is also a result of our shrinking attention span – soundbites in the US are down to an average of 9 seconds, which allows just 12 words for a politician to convey their message.

One of the consequences of this highly structured approach is that politicians can never admit to an error. I was former prime minister Tony Blair's chief of staff for 13 years, and while we apologised for things we were not responsible for – the Irish potato famine, the wrongful imprisonment of the Guildford Four – we never apologised for things we had actually done. The same is true of David Cameron, who as prime minister has apologised for Bloody Sunday but not for his government's errors.

Even when it comes to personal misdemeanours politicians seem unable to apologise properly. Maria Miller, the former culture secretary, managed only a 32-second mea culpa for her handling of an investigation into her overclaimed expenses. The fate of Nick Clegg after he made the highly unusual decision to

apologise publicly for changing his mind over tuition fees and was promptly monstered by the press (and voters and students) perhaps explains why they are so reluctant.

In a rational world we would want our politicians to apologise for errors, and make a U-turn as soon as possible rather than persisting with daft policies. But they have become so defensive that they

fear of committing a gaffe means that, for many politicians, the highest aspiration is just to get through an interview without making news. Instead of answering an interviewer's question they try to redefine it, "the real question is" and then repeating what they had been sent on television to say. This blunting of politics turns the public off.

In reaction we have seen the rise of a new brand of apparently more free-wheeling "authentic" politician, not averse to apologising – for dissing Liverpool in the case of Boris Johnson – or cracking non-PC jokes. In reality, however, the London mayor and aspirant

Tory leader is every bit as pre-prepared. So are such figures as Ukip leader Nigel Farage and Respect party MP George Galloway. When Mr Johnson got into difficulties answering questions about his personal life in a BBC interview he resorted to blurting out "permission to obfuscate", in an attempt to use humour to get himself out of a jam, something he had almost certainly prepared earlier.

The public does not want unprofessional politicians any more than unprofessional dentists. But we do need to find a more civilised form of discourse in which politicians are able to admit they have got things wrong and reverse track without fearing for their careers. Interviewers and news editors need to cut the politicians some slack; and politicians, in turn, need to relax their message discipline and not to worry so much about making gaffes. If both did so it would make for much better policy and much more interesting TV.

The writer, Downing Street chief of staff from 1997 to 2007, will present a programme on political speech on BBC Radio 4

In Downing Street we apologised for the Irish potato famine, but not for anything we actually did

cannot even admit they do not know the answer to a question – as the recent car crash of an interview – between Andrew Neil and Natalie Bennett, Green party leader, graphically showed. Instead of admitting that the numbers in her manifesto were aspirations rather than facts she dug herself ever deeper into a hole in response to his questions about a missing £45bn.

The writer is a former diplomat who lives and works in Italy

BUSINESS LIFE

Hearing yourself in the machine

WORKING LIVES

Emma Jacobs

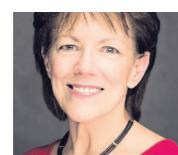
The unusual and fragile world of the people who loaned their voices to Apple's Siri and other technological applications

Robotic. That is what the voice message on Jon Briggs's phone sounds like. It is not the delivery, which is perfectly human. But because his voice is on so many technological applications, most notably Siri, the iPhone's personal assistant, his voice, which is so familiar, seems synonymous with technology.

Friends often complain they cannot get rid of him. His voice is on their sat-nav and on automated telephone systems. One friend recently heard a chorus of Mr Briggs's voice coming from their daughter's room; upon investigation they discovered all the animated penguins on her game app spoke with his voice. Most disturbing for Mr Briggs, was when he received a phone call from himself trying to flog payment protection insurance.

An offer of work to provide the voice for Reading's bus service was rescinded, he claims, after local employer, Microsoft, discovered that the voice of a com-

Voiceover star:
Susan Bennett,
the former US
voice of Siri, who
says digital voices
are the future.



You talking to me? An iPhone user sends a text using Siri, a voice recognition system. Below, Jon Briggs, who provided one of the voices for Siri

Corbis

ered in a flat, even way. These were later taken away and dissected so that the phonics could be reassembled in new sentences in response to any question the user poses. Aside from asking Siri predictable questions about locations of restaurants or the day's weather forecast, there is pleasure to be found demanding "who let the dogs out", or "the best place to bury a body".

Scott Brave, the co-author of *Wired for Speech: How Voice Activates and Advances the Human Computer Relationship*, notes that users imbue technology with human attributes. "We respond socially to the voice even when we know it's a machine," he says. He cites the example of BMW, which had to recall German cars installed with its navigation system. Male drivers objected to taking directions from a woman's voice.

More generally, he says, dominant personalities prefer submissive-sounding machines.

Mr Briggs loves Siri and uses it all the time, particularly to schedule appointments. "It's very clear." He thinks it is an important breakthrough for those who cannot read or have poor sight.

This view is not shared by Susan Bennett, the former US voice of Siri. (Ed Primeau, a forensic audiologist has analysed her voice and confirms that it was used in an older version of Siri).

The 65-year-old confesses she found listening to Siri a bit creepy. It was not that she

hated hearing herself – that is an everyday occurrence for the voice recording artist. She is used to hearing her voice over tannoy at airports and stores, as well as telephone on-hold systems. She is her son's bank's automated voice and it tickles her to assume that voice and taunt him by saying: "Thank you for calling the bank. You are overdrawn."

It was interacting with herself that felt so peculiar. "It was very strange having my voice coming back to me from my hand. I said, 'Hi Siri, what are you doing?' Siri said, disgustedly: 'Talking to

Digital voices will probably replace voiceover artists. The danger is we're giving our jobs to computers'

you." Why did the company choose her? "They wanted an otherworldly voice and had to have a sense that the voice would have a dry sense of humour – I don't think the new voice has that quality." The identities behind Siri's voices on newer operating systems (iOS7 and iOS8) are unknown.

Secretly, the Atlanta-based Ms Bennett is rather pleased to no longer be the "voice of Big Brother", as she refers to Siri. She is far more gloomy about the creep of technology than Mr Briggs.

Originally a singer for jingles, she was "discovered" one day when the talent – the person who was meant to

do the advertisement's voiceover – failed to turn up and the studio manager asked her to stand in. "A lightbulb went on in my head" after delivering the lines.

The work, she says, has been "fun and creative". Moreover, "it paid pretty well".

The business was changed with the arrival of the web, she says. Suddenly producers could get talent from anywhere in the world. "The internet has devalued things," she reflects. "Voiceover is no different from any other industry." Producers can get a voiceover from Fiverr.com, the global online marketplace offering creative services for just \$5 a job, she says.

"As long as you have a microphone you can do it. No one wants professionalism any more. They want the guy next door." Mr Briggs is more sanguine. "I didn't have to work for my voice. I was blessed with it." He believes the shift means the industry is better reflecting a broad range of accents.

Will these two voices of the machine find themselves redundant come the "second machine age", to use the title of the book describing the jobs revolution (and job losses) triggered by technological advances? Ms Bennett is bleak. "Digital voices will probably replace voiceover artists. The danger is we're giving our jobs to computers."

Mr Briggs is more circumspect. "I don't think you can replace people yet." Once machines can emote, things will change, he says. Nonetheless, he is hopeful. "Humans are very adaptable."

Personal technology

Charge HR and Surge
Fitbit's new wristband and smartwatch aim for the heart

TIM BRADSHAW



The Fitbit name has become synonymous with fitness-tracking wristbands. More than two-thirds of all activity trackers sold in 2013 were Fitbits, outpacing rivals such as Jawbone's UP or Nike's Fuelband.

But 2014 was a year of upset in wearable-technology. Fitbit recalled up to 1m of its Force wristbands after complaints of skin irritation.

Nike chose to focus on making apps for other companies' devices. Many new rivals emerged, from Misfit's Shine and Withings's Activité Pop to the forthcoming Apple Watch.

And better smartphone motion sensors led to the rise of cheap apps such as Moves, Strava and Human that can track workouts or daily exercise without a separate wristband.

All this leaves a company such as Fitbit with a conundrum: aim to do something a smartphone cannot while broadening the appeal of the fitness wristband. Its response has been to extend its range of wristbands out of the weight-watchers crowd and towards the triathletes, while trying to retain its mass-market brand identity.

The result is somewhat confusing for those of us somewhere in between.

Optical sensors
The key new sensor in both of Fitbit's latest devices, the Charge HR band and the Surge "superwatch", is a heart-rate monitor. Heart rate is considered a much better gauge of health than merely counting steps, measuring sleep and counting calories. But in that case, the monitor requires a much more complex sensor, meaning the wristband is bulkier and more expensive.

Fitbit's Charge HR is the slimmer of the two, because it has only a small, fingernail-sized screen for displaying the time and your activity data. The Surge, however, also has a GPS sensor and a standard-sized watch screen, making it a lot chunkier overall.

Both have optical sensors that continually flash a light on the back of the wristband into the skin to measure blood flow, so monitoring is constant. If the watch is strapped on too loosely, the reading can be corrupted by external light. Even so, this is becoming the standard:

similar technology is used by Basis's Peak and Microsoft's Band.

The \$100 difference
If the \$150 Charge HR is a step up from Fitbit's regular pedometers, the Surge is a

giant leap, in capabilities as well as price. Whether the \$250 Surge is worth the extra \$100 depends a lot on your exercise habit and your fashion sense. Next to other GPS-tracking sports watches by Garmin or Polar, Fitbit's is smaller and neater. But compared with a conventional watch, the square black screen and thick rubber wristband is inelegant, to say the least.

As well as running, the Surge can be set to track specific kinds of exercise, including spinning, weights, yoga, golf and tennis (but not cycling or swimming). During a workout, the watch display shifts time, distance and heart rate. You can see a fuller picture later once you have downloaded the data to the smartphone app.

Fitbit's app does not provide as much detail as Basis or as many nudges and prompts as Jawbone, but it is cleanly designed, easy to understand and updates quickly and reliably.

Also, the Surge's non-fitness features look limited compared with smartwatches from Samsung or those promised by Apple: it can show phone call and text-message alerts, but not notifications from other apps. Its touchscreen is low resolution and black-and-white, but that does mean its battery lasts for a few days, rather than just one or two, which is what is expected from the forthcoming Apple Watch, if it lives up to the hype.

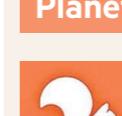
Fitbit says the Surge should not be compared with the Apple Watch or Android Wear devices such as the Moto 360, because it is designed for a more sporty or athletic consumer. But its confusing user interface and button configuration does remind me of old MP3 players before the iPod came along.

Its design shortcomings might be forgiven if the fitness tracking capabilities were better. I am no marathon runner, but reviewers say its heart-rate tracking is not as reliable as they would like over long-distance workouts.

As for the Charge HR, it looks positively small and sleek compared with the Surge. It seems well suited to people who want to keep their stylish traditional watch but put an affordable yet sophisticated fitness tracker on their other wrist.

The verdict: With two months to go until Apple Watch arrives, it is hard to recommend either of these new devices unreservedly. Fitbit may be able to measure my heart, but its devices lack soul.

Planet of the apps



What it is

Nutshell Camera, free for iPhone

Why you should try it

Prezi, an online PowerPoint alternative for making nifty presentations, this week released Nutshell Camera, an iPhone app for making

little nuggets of video. Take three photos, and Nutshell blends them into a short animated story. Text or digital stickers can be placed over the video and, like Prezi's zooming slideshows, seem to hover in space as Nutshell pans over your pictures.

When you want something more than a photo but don't want to bother editing a full video, it is a great way to spice up an Instagram post.

The kosher haute cuisine restaurant hunting a Michelin star

An Italian chef has found an unusual niche in Paris, writes Adam Thomson

Nobody would have blamed Simone Zanoni for walking away when a Jewish businessman from Paris approached him with the idea of establishing an haute cuisine kosher restaurant.

As executive chef at the two Michelin stars Gordon Ramsay restaurant at Trianon Palace hotel in Versailles, Mr Zanoni already had a lot on his plate. The thought of a classically trained, non-Jewish Italian taking on something he had only ever read about was surely a non-starter.

"So of course, I said yes," he recalls, arguing that Jews observing the dietary laws had no good restaurants to go to. "It's a no-brainer."

Approaching its first anniversary, Rafael, as the restaurant in Paris's 17th arrondissement is called, is doing well. The 38-year-old Mr Zanoni says that he has already achieved operational break-even. The next goal: a Michelin star.

He has also secured \$10m in financ-

ing to set up a similar venture in New York, with a different investor. The plan is to open before the end of this year.

For the most part, Mr Zanoni's customers are Jews from France – the country has the world's third-largest Jewish population – as well as from Russia, Israel and the US.

Mr Zanoni says that the restaurant has weathered January's terrorist attacks in Paris by Islamist extremists, one of whom killed hostages in a kosher supermarket. "We lost some tourist trade initially but the locals kept coming," he says.

Until Rafael opened, the terms "fine dining" and "kosher" rarely appeared together. Scour online Jewish forums and the community's top kosher picks generally settle on Chinese restaurants.

Mr Zanoni is the first to admit the project was tough. The first challenge was gutting the site, which was a kosher restaurant that fell a long way short of Mr Zanoni's standards.

Before joining the Trianon Palace restaurant, he worked in London, first at Aubergine from 1997, then as sous-chef at Petrus and Claridge's, and finally as head chef from 2003 to 2007 at the

Grande cuisine: Rafael's chef Simone Zanoni perfects one of his culinary creations

three Michelin stars Gordon Ramsay restaurant.

"To be honest, the previous kosher restaurant was a bit scabby," says Mr Zanoni in an Italian meets East End London accent. "The only thing we left was the walls. Then we knocked those down, too."

Today, Rafael seats between 60 and 70, and is decorated in a conservative light grey with purple velvet chairs. The transformation cost €600,000, half of which went into the kitchen.

Out front, Mr Zanoni has covered all the bases. Serving wine is only done by Jewish waiters, in accordance with

kosher law. But the biggest challenges were behind the scenes.

The first was preparation. Meat was a must so Mr Zanoni banished dairy, in accordance with the kosher prohibition on mixing the two. "Every law you have learnt about cooking you have to throw out the window," he says. "How are you supposed to make a risotto without butter or cheese?"

Today, Rafael offers his customers a rich and creamy risotto without cheese or butter. A delicious – and butterless – tarte tatin is also on the menu. One benefit is that lactose-intolerant diners can eat anything on the menu.

Sourcing was another challenge. Mr Zanoni says that finding the few kosher butchers in Paris with whom he works was easy; the hard part was teaching them techniques that they had not used before, like ageing meat and improving the quality of feed for livestock.

Mr Zanoni, who is planning a kosher recipe book, says the results are already on display. But there is more to do. As he puts it, "there are things that traditional gastronomy thought about 200 years ago that we are only just now starting to do with kosher food."



Old romantics cast adrift in Manhattan

FILM

Nigel Andrews



happened to privacy? Writer-director Sachs (*Keep the Lights On*) is a gifted, Chekhovian miniaturist. He perfects every tic and tock of his two heroes' lives, as they gaze at the clock of their existence, robbed of the togetherness that made minutes, hours, days worthwhile. Molina and Lithgow are both superb: two crusty romantics searching for crumbs in a world that is too busy for love unless it comes tidy, manageable and vexation-free.

"No sex, please, we're British" is the apocryphal motto of a nation. *Love Is All*, a compilation documentary about screen love and sex in Britain through the ages, sets out to dispute, even deride it. Veteran filmmaker Kim Longinotto's cataract of clips argues that eros began early in these isles. A silent era full of cads and maskers moving in on helpless ingenues. ("So you've had a trip to Blackpool. You went with a chap!" screams an intertitled mum to a returning prodigal daughter.) A mid-century of gauche but often bold attempts at candour. And on down time's slope to the homoerotic spin cycles of *My Beautiful Laundrette* and the east-west love simmerings of *Brick Lane*.

It's a momentum-gathering film: a big dipper of the bizarre and beatific. While checking off cinema's arch and archetypal correlatives for sexual ecstasy (rollercoasters, trains entering tunnels), Longinotto finds ways to credit sex as an

Love Is Strange (15)

Ira Sachs

★★★★★

Love Is All (12A)

Kim Longinotto

★★★★★

Dancing in Jaffa (PG)

Hilla Medalia

★★★★★

Coherence (15)

James Ward Byrkit

★★★★★

superb: Alfred Molina and John Lithgow in 'Love Is Strange'. Below right: Burt Caesar in 'Jefferson's Garden'

Richard Lakos

honourable, perennial urge to liberation. Questing into the borderline-forbidden – transvestism, homosexuality, interracial love, fetishism – *Love Is All* discovers bygone traces even of that. Check out the girl gazing at a tractor's ridged metal seat and cooing, to a farm lad: "I'd like to sit on that." If not *Fifty Shades of Grey*, the film offers 50 to 100 shades of sepia, black-and-white and colour.

Culture and history are full of surprises. Who would have backed the Middle East to become the world's main workout centre for a famous Shakespeare adage? "Music hath charms to soothe the troubled breast." Following Daniel Barenboim's West-Eastern Divan Orchestra comes veteran ballroom champion Pierre Dulaine's "harmonise the races" dance initiative. His New York project – tens of thousands of deprived and diverse-ethnic youngsters taught to stop feeling alienated and begin the beguine – has already inspired a feature film starring Antonio Banderas (*Take the Lead*) and a docu-feature (*Mad Hot Ballroom*).

Here's another documentary. In *Dancing in Jaffa* Jewish and Palestinian kids barely able at first to touch palms –

rolling sweater sleeves over hands is a favourite defence – are coached and choreographed to contest class by the dance master. Jaffa-born himself, Dulaine is a blend of artist, autocrat and drama queen. The lead portraits among the youngsters are well chosen: a pudgy, shy Muslim girl, a pint-sized, puckish Arab . . . There are insight-rich peeps, too, into the lives and homes of parents on both sides of the religious divide.

Can a passing comet change the quantum dynamics of a planet? Of course it can. Ponder Schrödinger's cat – or Google it if you don't know about quantum science's famous moggie-in-a-box what-if – and then throw that cat, metaphorically, among the human pigeons gathered one California night in a low-budget sci-fi horror thriller called *Coherence*. The film's own coherence just about lasts the course, as the dinner parties discover that their night has cracked into multiple realities like a badly candled egg. They thought they were here to consume; they may be here to be consumed. It's clever, pacy, teasing, weird. To say more would be to spoil. Take your quantum science background notes and enjoy.



THEATRE

Jefferson's Garden
Palace Theatre, Watford, UK
★★★★★

Sarah Hemming

How do you write a successful history play? For her sprightly new drama *Timberlake Wertenbaker takes her lead from a certain Mr Shakespeare. The action opens, as does Henry V, with an appeal from the chorus for dramatic licence: "We have to ask you to be gender-blind, colour-blind, age-blind, shape-blind, but in all other ways perceptive," they say. It's a witty opening and it sets the tone for a play that picks its way nimbly through the complexities of the American War of Independence and interweaves weighty themes with theatrical mischief.*

Broadly, the drama follows Christian, a young idealist who leaves his Quaker family to join the fight against British rule: a move for which he is ostracised. He breaks his own principles, most crucially his vow not to kill, in honour of what he perceives to be a greater one, and is appalled when his hero, Thomas Jefferson, does not press for equality for slaves.

Wertenbaker suggests that many inequalities that still plague the US derive from this key failure. But the play has wider resonance still: the call of freedom, the urge to revolution, the disillusionment with compromises – these are still live issues all over the world. How do you start a society without betraying the very ideals that inspired you?

By focusing tightly on a few individuals, Wertenbaker homes in on the painful struggles between principle, pragmatism and personal interest while her chorus is ever present to puncture pomposity.

In Brigid Larmour's airy, simple production, David Burnett as Christian and William Hope as Jefferson convey their characters' complex, conflicted natures. Burt Caesar suggests the quiet dignity and Mimi Ndiweni the fierce integrity of two slaves who insist on their own freedom. And around them a versatile ensemble depicts the turbulence of a country in the grip of vast upheaval. A few plot twists too many slow the play, but this is a rich and generous drama about the elusive nature of freedom.

watfordpalace.theatre.co.uk

THIS EVENING'S TELEVISION



Pick of the day

"Brushed with genius" said Robin Lane Fox in the FT review of a 2013 exhibition; and *Secret Knowledge: In Search of Rory McEwen* (BBC4 7.30pm) shows why, with ravishing images of McEwen's botanical paintings. But 30 minutes is too short for the story of the aristocratic artist, sculptor, folk singer (pictured left, with brother Alex, far left) and blues specialist, who performed cabaret with Jonathan Miller, sang his

way across America, was applauded by Leadbelly's widow and died at 50. The programme, presented by his son-in-law Jools Holland, examines dazzling gifts casually accepted but devotedly deployed.

Robert Altman's direction should put steely satire into *Gosford Park*'s obvious trial run for *Downton Abbey*, but seems overawed by the likes of Dames Maggie, Helen and Eileen (ITV 10.40pm).

MARTIN HOYLE

BBC 1

6.00 BBC News.
6.30 BBC Regional News Programmes.
7.00 The One Show.
7.30 A Question of Sport. With former rugby league star Robbie Hunter-Paul. R
8.00 EastEnders.
8.30 Room 101.
9.00 The Musketeers. Athos is kidnapped and taken back to his estate of Pinon.
10.00 BBC News.
10.25 BBC Regional News and Weather.
10.35 The Graham Norton Show. Graham chats to Jamie Dornan, Julie Walters and Stephen Mangan. Music by Charli XCX and Rita Ora.
11.25 Bluestone 42. Bird hatches a plan to stop Nick and Mary talking about each other. Comedy drama.
Previously shown on BBC3.
11.55 EastEnders. R

BBC 2

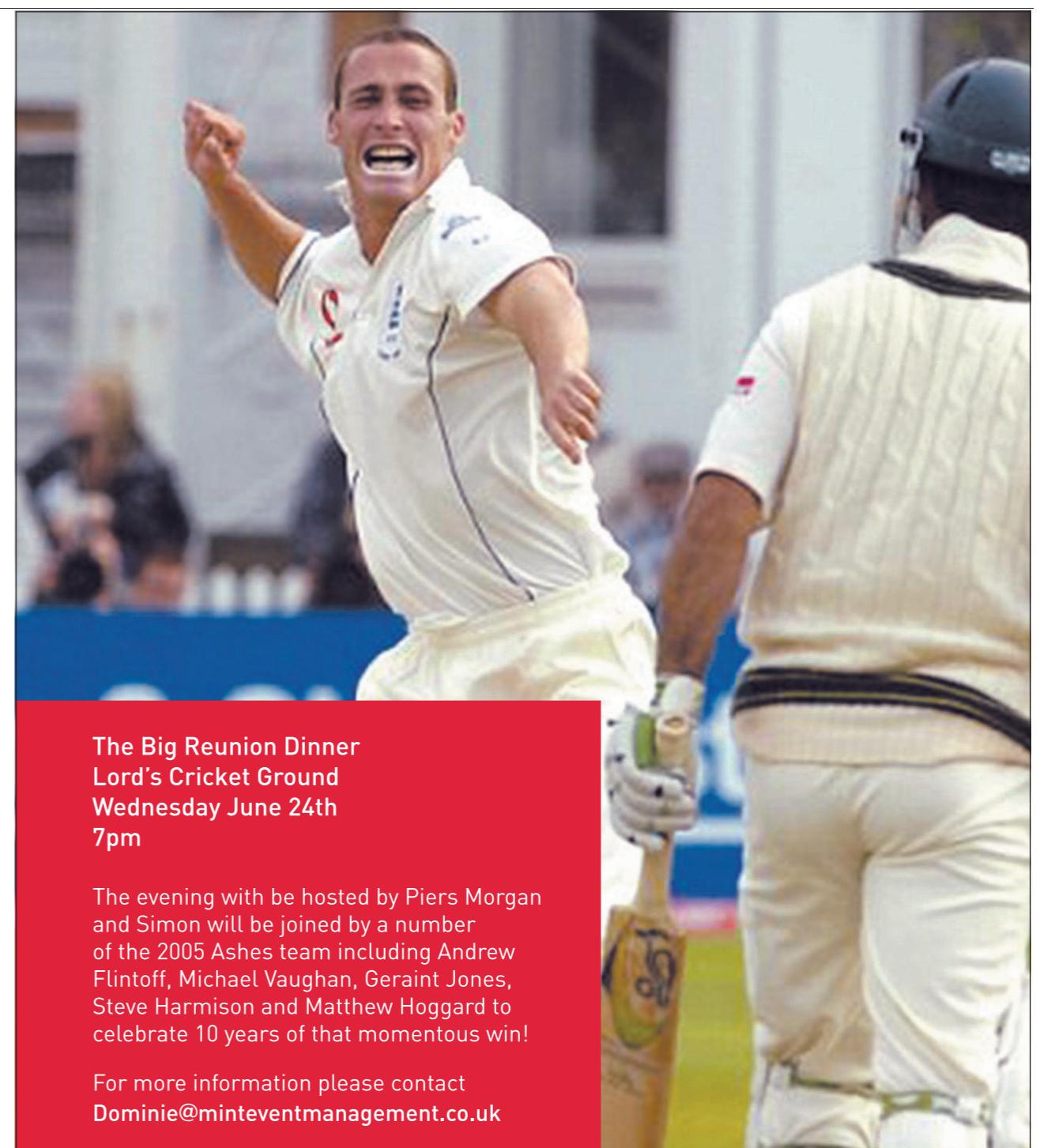
6.00 Eggheads. Quiz. R
6.30 The Great Antiques Map of Britain. Tim Wonnacott is at Manchester's Dig the City festival. Last in the series.
7.00 Antiques Road Trip. Mark Stacey and Catherine Southon travel to Dundee, Forfar, Inverurie and Cullen.
8.00 Mastermind.
8.30 Food & Drink.
9.00 Italy Unpacked. New series. Andrew Graham-Dixon and Giorgio Locatelli embark on a fresh tour of the country as they travel up the east coast.
10.30 Newsnight.
11.00 Weather.
11.05 FILM Tron: Legacy. Sci-fi adventure.

ITV London

6.00 ITV News London.
6.30 ITV News and Weather.
7.00 Emmerdale.
7.30 Coronation Street.
8.00 Bargaining Round Britain with John Sergeant. New series. The broadcaster journeys along some of Britain's best canals and delves into their history, beginning with the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.
8.30 Coronation Street.
9.00 Benidorm. Last in the series.
10.00 ITV News at Ten and Weather.
10.30 QL. Sarah Millican, Ross Noble and Colin Lane join Alan Davies to answer Stephen Fry's questions. R
11.05 Newsnight.
11.30 Weather.
11.45 FILM Gosford Park.

Channel 4

6.00 The Simpsons. R
6.30 Hollyoaks.
7.00 Channel 4 News.
8.00 Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. Paloma Faith relives childhood memories with a Portuguese salt cod dish and Jimmy Doherty brews his own DIY craft beer. Last in the series.
9.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Sean Lock and Jason Manford compete against guest captain Sarah Millican and Jonathan Ross. Last in the series.
10.00 The Last Leg. Adam Hills, Josh Widdicombe and Alex Brooker are joined by David Mitchell.
11.05 Catastrophe. Comedy. R
11.40 Brooklyn Nine-Nine. An investigator reveals there may be a mole in the precinct.



The Big Reunion Dinner
Lord's Cricket Ground
Wednesday June 24th
7pm

The evening will be hosted by Piers Morgan and Simon will be joined by a number of the 2005 Ashes team including Andrew Flintoff, Michael Vaughan, Geraint Jones, Steve Harmison and Matthew Hoggard to celebrate 10 years of that momentous win!

For more information please contact
Dominie@minteventmanagement.co.uk

Other channels

BBC3

7.00 Doctor Who: The Ultimate Guide. 7.15 Doctor Who. 8.00 Don't Tell the Bride. 9.00 Tough Young Teachers. 10.00 Russell Howard's Good News. 10.30 EastEnders. 11.00, 11.25 Family Guy. 11.45 American Dad!

BBC4

7.00 World News Today. 7.30 Secret Knowledge: In Search of Rory McEwen. 8.00 Symphony. 9.00 Neil Sedaka: King of Song. 10.00 Neil Sedaka Says: All You Need Is the Music. 10.45 You've Got a Friend: The Carole King Story. 11.45 Secret Knowledge: In Search of Rory McEwen.

Channel 5

6.00 Home and Away. 6.30 5 News Tonight. 7.00 The Billion Dollar Wreck Hunt. 8.00 Ice Road Truckers. 9.00 NCIS: New Orleans. 10.40 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. 11.35 True Crimes: The First 72 Hours.

More4

6.50 Building the Dream. 7.55 Grand Designs. 9.00 Black Swan. 11.05 Gogglebox.

Film4

6.25 The Wind Rises. 9.00 Hanna. 11.10 Basic Instinct.

Sky Atlantic

6.00 House. 7.00 Blue Bloods.

Sky Arts 1

6.00 Without a Trace. 9.00 Penny Dreadful. 10.00 Fortitude. 11.00 Hello Ladies. 11.35 Hello Ladies.

Sky Sports 1

6.00 Barclays Premier League Legends. 6.30 The Fantasy Football Club. 7.30 Live First Utility Super League. 10.15 Super League Gold. 10.30 The Fantasy Football Club. 11.30 Barclays Premier League Legends.

Sky Arts 2

6.00 South Bank Show Originals: Daniel Barenboim. 6.30 South Bank Show Originals: William Golding. 7.00 4 Better 4 Worse: The Anatomy of a String Quartet. 8.00 Plácido Domingo Live at Loreley. 10.05 Three Tenors: The Impossible Dream. 11.25 Roland Petit's Le Rendez-Vous.

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Companies & Markets

FINANCIAL TIMES

Private dining rooms A John Bond suite but no Green room at HSBC
CITY INSIDER, PAGE 22



	Fanuc	Credit Suisse	EDF	Greek equities	Swedish krona	Nikkei 225	Gold	Brent crude
	6.22% ¥22,045	9.09% SFr21.60	3.84% €23.41	6.7% 846.48	0.6% SKr8.3772	1.9% 17,979	0.11% \$1,220.40	4.39% \$57.06

Shire faces fresh scrutiny over tax

Questions on Dublin-based company's \$1.6bn break fee from failed AbbVie drugs merger

ANDREW WARD AND VANESSA HOUDLER — LONDON
VINCENT BOLAND — DUBLIN

Shire has been advised that the \$1.6bn "break fee" received from AbbVie after the collapse of their abortive merger is not taxable, exposing the Dublin-based, UK-listed drugmaker to fresh scrutiny over its tax affairs.

The windfall, one of the biggest of its kind, was paid by AbbVie last October after the US drugmaker pulled out of its agreed £32bn takeover of Shire.

Shire said: "The company has obtained advice that the break fee should not be taxable in Ireland . . . [and] has therefore concluded that no tax liability should arise." However, it

cautioned that "this has not been agreed with the tax authorities".

Jeff Poulton, interim chief financial officer, said that the company was in the early stages of dialogue with Irish tax authorities. The Irish Revenue said it would not comment on individual cases.

Shire has already committed the break fee to help finance its \$5.2bn acquisition of US-based NPS Pharmaceuticals agreed last month.

International tax experts said that break fees would be taxable in most cases in the US and the UK but acknowledged that it was a complex area and Shire's case would depend on Irish tax law.

Irish tax experts said that compensa-

tion-type payments were generally taxable in Ireland. Peter Vale, tax partner at Grant Thornton in Dublin, said: "Payments such as this would often be subject to tax, but there may be circumstances where it falls out of the tax net."

The prospect of Shire's windfall remaining tax-free adds a further twist to a saga that has shone a spotlight on corporate tax policies on both sides of the Atlantic. AbbVie wanted to buy Shire in part to reduce its heavy US corporate tax burden by moving its official headquarters to the UK.

The deal collapsed after President Barack Obama's administration tightened US tax rules to make these so-called "inversions" less attractive.

It is 'very hard to conceive that [a break fee] would not be subject to tax'

Shire moved its headquarters from the UK to Ireland in 2008 to take advantage of the latter's lower corporate rate.

It has been among the companies attacked by MPs in the UK for using complex tax structures in Luxembourg.

Flemming Ornskov, chief executive, said Shire met all its tax obligations around the world and tried to behave in a responsible manner.

The advice on the AbbVie break fee came to light in Shire's fourth-quarter financial results. The company reported a better-than-expected 19 per cent increase in revenues to \$1.58bn and earnings-per-share of \$2.63, up 17 per cent.

Lombard page 22

Digital motif Christie's casts its lot with web platform

Christie's has moved to improve its online operations by buying a platform that allows art buyers to manage collections on digital devices, as it seeks to strengthen ties with wealthy investors, writes Elizabeth Paton.

The purchase by the auction house of Collectrium is the first under chief executive Patricia Baribet, the former chairman who took over after the resignation of Steven Murphy.

The sale price was \$16m, people familiar with the situation said.

Christie's has invested heavily in consolidating its online position ahead of rivals such as Sotheby's, spending as much as \$50m on online sales platforms to reach emerging market customers.

Last summer Sotheby's announced a partnership with eBay to distribute its live auctions to eBay's 150m buyers.

Christie's acquisition is aimed at strengthening its online inventory management. The house has struggled to build that part of its business.

Collectrium offers "ironclad security and encryption", data retrieval on scanned art works and valuations in multiple currencies alongside the ability to manage collections.

Pictured at Christie's yesterday is René Magritte's "Le Thérapeute".



Kirsty Wigglesworth/AP

Short View

James Mackintosh

Investors have spent a lot of time worrying about Grexit recently. How long will it be before fears of "Brexit", or Britain leaving the European Union, start to affect prices?

Indirectly the effect is already visible, as pre-election jitters start to appear in option prices ahead of May's poll.

This week the maturity of the three-month rolling sterling-dollar option passed the election date, and implied volatility jumped sharply. Equity options are priced for a move in the FTSE 100 the day after the vote, up or down, of close to 4 per cent, up from 1.5 per cent at the start of the year, according to Kokou Agbo-Bloua at Société Générale.

Derivative traders expect more volatility than usual because the outcome of the election is more uncertain than usual. No party is likely to have a majority, and a coalition will probably be harder to put together than in 2010, when politicians were under intense pressure amid a weak economy and jumpy markets. Psephologists expect a minority government, risking another election not too long afterwards and adding to policy uncertainty.

So far election worries do not seem to have appeared in equities, bonds or the pound (though they were cited by surveyors as a reason for a slowdown in London housing).

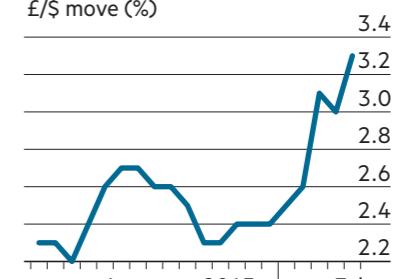
Hawkish comments yesterday from Mark Carney, Bank of England governor, about the path of rate rises over the next two years helped push up the pound and, before weak US retail sales prompted a global drop, 10-year gilt yields. Sterling hit its highest level against the euro since the end of 2007, before falling back.

Investors have plenty of other things to worry about: deflation, Greece, Ukraine, oil, emerging markets and the mixed signals from the US economy. Those focused on the UK also have the budget in March. If the pattern of the Scottish referendum is followed, though, it may not be long after Budget day before the election becomes the main point of discussion: with uncertainty always bad for prices.

It is not just that the outcome of Britain's election is hard to call. It is also that it is not obvious even what a (highly unlikely) clear win would mean. Usually markets favour Conservatives over Labour. But with the Tories promising a referendum on Europe, currency and bond traders' preference for austerity may be offset by the fear of Brexit.

UK election uncertainty

Option-implied post-election day



This week the maturity of the three-month rolling sterling-dollar option passed the election date, and implied volatility jumped

james.mackintosh@ft.com



Mixed fortunes for luxury groups as China sobers up

For Pernod Ricard, and even more for Rémy Cointreau, China's newfound austerity has meant a severe hangover. On the other hand, relative newcomer Hermès, which has expanded slowly, has shown resilience, helped by Chinese shoppers' partiality for novelty.

Fashion victims ► PAGE 19

Rio Tinto defies sector gloom as it lifts dividend and announces \$2bn buyback

JAMES WILSON — CAPE TOWN
HENRY SANDERSON AND NEIL HUME — LONDON

Rio Tinto defied the gloom in the commodities sector by raising its dividend and announcing a \$2bn share buyback, while also saying it would rebuff any new approach from Glencore.

Rio has been under pressure to make good on promises to increase returns to shareholders and ward off Glencore. The Swiss-based mining house can make another approach in April under UK takeover rules, after a merger proposal was rejected by Rio last year.

Announcing full-year results that surpassed analysts' expectations, and a large reduction in group debt, Sam

Walsh, chief executive, said Rio was "stronger" as an independent company.

"On our last roadshow in November and December, I said to analysts and investors, 'I don't know why you are giving this [the Glencore approach] any ear at all, because it's not going to happen.'

"If you look at the investor session today there was not a single question about Glencore, and that says it all in my view."

Although Mr Walsh and Chris Lynch, Rio's finance director, stopped short of promising a further share buyback next year, they said the company should have enough financial flexibility to consider one.

Mr Walsh said Rio had "the strongest balance sheet of the major mining com-

panies" and could continue to generate returns for shareholders in spite of conditions that have seen prices of commodities including copper and iron ore fall sharply.

In the year to December 31, Rio reported underlying earnings of \$9.3bn, down 10 per cent compared with 2013. This was driven by an 18 per cent reduction in earnings from iron ore, by far Rio's most important commodity. Annual revenue fell from \$51.2bn to \$47.7bn.

Rio increased its full-year dividend 12 per cent to \$2.15 a share, which was higher than analysts were expecting. Shares in Rio rose 2.3 per cent to £50.40 yesterday.

Lombard page 22

WORLD'S FIRST

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Aerospace

Struggling Bombardier scraps dividend

Aircraft maker announces new chief and explores 'potential consolidation'

ROBERT WRIGHT — NEW YORK

Bombardier yesterday announced a new chief executive and moved to restore its finances by scrapping the dividend and revealing plans for a \$600m rights issue.

The Montreal-based aircraft maker — which is struggling to break the duopoly held by Airbus and Boeing in passenger jets above 100 seats — also said it would explore "potential participation in industry consolidation" to cut its debt.

The announcements follow Bombardier's profit warning on January 15,

which prompted investor concern about how product development costs were eroding the cash position.

The widely-traded B shares were down 12.5 per cent to C\$2.66 at yesterday lunchtime in Toronto.

Bombardier, the world's third-largest commercial-aircraft maker and largest passenger-train manufacturer, posted a net loss of \$1.59bn for the fourth quarter, compared with a profit of \$97m in the same period in 2013. The deterioration came as the group booked \$1.36bn of special charges because of the halting of its Learjet 85 business-jet plan. Revenue rose 12 per cent to \$5.96bn.

Pierre Beaudoin, grandson of Bombardier's founder, will step down today as chief executive to become executive chairman. His father, Laurent Beau-

doin, will step down as chairman after 50 years to become chairman emeritus. The Beaudoin-Bombardier family continues to control a majority of the voting shares.

The new chief executive will be Alain Bellemare, former head of United Technologies' aerospace and propulsion systems division, which includes Pratt & Whitney, the jet-engine maker.

"We have one overriding objective at Bombardier: to become a true high-performance organisation with improved margins and better execution," Pierre Beaudoin said. "We are determined and focused on delivering."

Bombardier is reeling from development delays and higher than expected costs for its C Series passenger jet. Mr Beaudoin told analysts that the C Series' development costs had now reached \$5.4bn, from a previously-announced \$4.9bn.

The C Series has secured only 243 orders. The company had targeted 500 before the commercial launch.

Available short-term capital resources declined \$1bn to \$3.8bn over the year to the end of December. Within that, cash and cash equivalents declined \$900m to \$2.5bn.

Bombardier said it would seek to issue \$600m in equity and take on \$1.5bn in new long-term debt, depending on market conditions. It would also stop paying dividends on common shares.

The company "will explore other initiatives such as certain business activities' potential participation in industry consolidation in order to reduce debt".



Chief executive
Pierre Beaudoin
is to step down

Technology hardware

TomTom back on track after deal with VW

DUNCAN ROBINSON — BRUSSELS

TomTom has signed a deal with Volkswagen to put its traffic-management technology into the German group's vehicles, helping send shares in the Dutch satnav maker up 16 per cent as it continues to focus on selling directly to carmakers rather than consumers.

The deal comes as the Amsterdam-based group said that it expected to raise annual sales for the first time in four years after a period of poor performance.

TomTom's traffic technology — which helps drivers avoid traffic jams — will be used in Audi and Volkswagen-branded vehicles, before moving on to other brands in the German carmaker's stable. In recent years, TomTom has altered its business model in an attempt to turn round rapidly declining sales and profits.

Volkswagen joins Fiat Chrysler, Daimler, Renault, Peugeot and Toyota in signing an exclusive deal with the Dutch group. The change in strategy comes after the rise of cheap GPS-enabled smartphone apps dented TomTom's business.

TomTom targeted annual sales of just over €1bn for 2015, having posted a drop in annual revenue every year from 2010. Revenues at TomTom fell a third from €1.5bn in 2009 to €959m in 2014.

Its profitability has endured a similarly precipitous drop as customers opted for cheaper — or free — rivals. Net income fell from €86.4m in 2009 to €25.4m last year.

Despite this, TomTom still accounts for roughly 80 per cent of traffic-management systems, according to chief executive Harold Goddijn.

Elsewhere in the business, sales of the group's standalone satnavs have bottomed out, with TomTom reporting sales growth for the first time in three years at the start of 2014.

Mr Goddijn said that TomTom's large market share gave it better data to work with when compiling traffic data. "We have the largest group of connected cars out there," he said. "The technology is important, but the source data are a critical factor."

The era of the so-called "connected car" — which lets manufacturers do everything from updating a car's entertainment system to adjusting its suspension — has forced carmakers into partnerships with technology companies.

Competitive concerns mean that manufacturers are unable or unwilling to share data with rivals and so rely on third parties for services such as traffic management, according to Mr Goddijn. "It is not practical for every carmaker to make that investment individually," he said.

Shares in TomTom rallied to €6.84 yesterday. They have more than doubled since the group's nadir in 2011, when they fell 70 per cent in less than a year to €2.49.

Cars. Material advantage

Gearing up for carbon fibre's arrival



Carmakers are exploring ways to take the strong, lightweight material into the mass market

On track to the production line: a Cadillac ATS-V racing car could be bringing a step change in fuel efficiency
— Richard Prince/Cadillac

With its aggressive looks, the 170mph Cadillac ATS-VR racing car stood out from the crowd at last month's Detroit auto show — not least because of the long wing stretching across the vehicle's rear.

This wing is made from carbon fibre: a strong and light material that is also very expensive, meaning that its use has so far been confined to high-end, low-volume vehicles. Yet there were signs at Detroit of a change in the motor industry's attitude to the esoteric material, with US manufacturers led by General Motors and Ford seeking to turn carbon fibre into a building block for mass-market cars.

This is because the material could underpin a step change in vehicles' fuel efficiency by making them much lighter — carbon fibre is as strong as steel but half the weight or less. Jeff Owens, chief technology officer for Delphi Automotive, a car-component supplier, says: "It's extremely strong and very light."

But the carmakers face significant challenges in turning carbon fibre into a material for mass-market cars — notably whether they can come up with an efficient manufacturing process to produce components in large volumes.

Ford announced in Detroit that it was starting a joint research effort with Dow Aksa — a joint venture involving Dow Chemical of the US and Turkey's

Aksa — on automotive-grade carbon fibre. GM, Cadillac's parent, has been engaged for more than three years in a research programme with Japan's Teijin that is similar to Ford's effort.

The push to develop carbon fibre in the motor industry is only the latest in a series of changes stemming from US rules requiring carmakers to improve their vehicles' average fuel efficiency from 27.5 miles per gallon in 2012 to 54.5 mpg by 2025.

The question for carmakers is whether there will ever be a breakthrough moment for carbon-fibre equivalent to the introduction last year of aluminium body panels on Ford's F150 pickup truck, North America's best-selling vehicle. This marked the first use of aluminium in a truly mass-market vehicle, and the switch away from steel reduced the F150's weight by 13 per cent compared with its predecessor model.

GM, like other carmakers and component suppliers, says that it is hard to predict whether there will be a breakthrough soon for carbon fibre.

"Maybe it results in a new [manufacturing] process in a short period of time — maybe not," adds the company.

Manufacturing components from carbon fibre tends to be labour intensive, slow, and ill-suited to the ways in which car factories operate. This is because parts are made by sealing carbon threads with resin and baking the mixture hard, and components typically emerge in large batches rather than in a steady stream.

GM's research is exploring the potential for mixes of carbon fibre and plas-

tics to make the manufacturing process simpler.

Jim DeVries, head of materials and manufacturing research at Ford, focuses on the time it takes to produce carbon-fibre components as the biggest problem. "You see carbon fibre used in a lot of luxury vehicles, lower volume vehicles," he says. "The challenge and the focus of [our] programme is to bring it from niche and lower-volume to high-volume products."

There was one early sign at Detroit that carbon fibre might be close to making it into the mass market. Johnson Controls, the automotive supplier, was exhibiting its prototype Camisia seat with a carbon-fibre frame that is 40 per lighter than metal equivalents.

Andreas Eppinger, head of technology for Johnson Controls' seating division, says that the seat design has resolved many of the industry's problems.

The company has simplified the manufacturing process and developed robots to produce the carbon fibre, meaning it should be possible to make 200,000 seats each year on a single production line. However, such production methods are likely to remain more expensive than existing techniques for the foreseeable future.

But Mr Owens points out that carmakers face ever-greater costs in the main alternative means of improving fuel economy — boosting engine efficiency.

"As [other means] to meet some of the fuel-economy and emissions regulations become more and more expensive, some of the alternatives start to look better and better," he says, in a nod towards carbon fibre.

INSIDE BUSINESS

TECHNOLOGY

Richard Waters



'Net neutrality' regime is a modern take on a different age's rules

Be careful what you wish for. That is the message for companies like Google and Facebook as US regulators move ahead with a plan to enshrine the idea of an open internet in regulation.

On the face of it, the big internet companies will have scored a significant victory if the Federal Communications Commission votes, as expected, for its new "net neutrality" rules this month. The regime is intended to make sure broadband and other network providers cannot block or otherwise hold internet services to ransom.

Who could take issue with such a noble purpose? Telecom regulation is not usually the kind of thing to excite much public interest, but this is a cause that has reverberated widely. Populist campaigns like the one waged over net neutrality, however, do not allow for much in the way of nuance.

The problem comes with the form the rules will take. With heavy nudging from the White House, the FCC has opted to repurpose an authority it was given under an old telecoms law, known as Title II, to make it apply to the internet era.

Like all deeply technical issues that become political footballs, it has not been hard for the rival camps to turn this into opposing talking points. Depending on where you stand, it is either bold action to protect an open internet or inappropriately sweeping utility-style regulation.

What is indisputable is that the legislation the FCC is relying on was designed for circuit-switched telephone networks in a different age. The only way to adapt it to modern times is to suppress certain parts of Title II and implement it piecemeal. The FCC promises a light touch: in particular, it says it will avoid price regulation or any requirements that might force operators to unbundle their networks.

If history is any guide, a challenge in the courts will follow. There is simply too much at stake for the regulations not to be tested. And, as was the case with the last approach to net neutrality, it is not beyond the courts to reject the FCC's compromise as unduly arbitrary.

This is where things could become dicey for companies such as Google and Facebook. Who knows how some future FCC would interpret its new Title II powers, or whether a court would order a different implementation of the law. Price regulation of the internet's interconnection agreements would always be a looming threat.

It is not just the impact in the US itself that is at stake. There is also the question of what message US regulators are about to send to the rest of the world. The risk is that Washington will be seen to be giving a nod of approval to the idea of extending traditional telecoms rate regulations to the internet.

Telecoms operators in Europe have argued strenuously for this in the past. They would like to see internet companies forced to pay more to access customers over their networks. The idea has so far failed to carry the day in the international forums where such issues are debated, but could get a new lease of life if the US is perceived to be sanctioning telecom-style regulation of the internet.

Even under the FCC's current plans, there is a risk that the informal agreements between internet companies and network providers governing the terms on which they connect could be subjected to closer scrutiny. That is unlikely to be welcomed at a company like Google, which operates one of the largest global networks for carrying internet traffic.

Some business models that favour the internet companies could also be under threat. Ajit Pai, a Republican commissioner on the FCC, claimed this week that the new rules would bar "zero-rating" arrangements. These are the deals under which mobile companies offer access to certain internet services without charging customers' data plans — a marketing arrangement that keeps mobile fees low but favours zero-rated services over others.

Facebook has used this model extensively to provide subsidised access to its service in the developing world. If the US is seen to question the idea, international challenges may follow.

It is ironic, then, that the internet companies have little choice but to keep their mouths shut and go along with the Obama administration's approach to net neutrality regulation.

The groundswell of public support — and the strong backing from within their own engineering ranks — makes it hard to take a stand that would make them appear to be against the idea. For better or worse, this is one regulatory bandwagon that now seems unstoppable.

Richard.Waters@ft.com

Cars

GM aims to 'shake up' electric automobile market with 200-mile range Bolt

ROBERT WRIGHT — NEW YORK

General Motors signalled its determination to "completely shake up" the electric vehicle market by announcing it would manufacture the Chevrolet Bolt, intended to run 200 miles on a battery charge and cost just \$30,000.

Yesterday's announcement at the Chicago auto show follows GM's surprise unveiling of the Chevrolet Bolt concept

car on the first day of last month's Detroit auto show.

The decision by GM — the US's biggest automaker by sales — illustrates its determination to use its scale, marketing power and dealer network to dominate the US's emerging market for non-gasoline vehicles. The Bolt has been widely seen as a pre-emptive move ahead of Tesla Motors' planned introduction of its Model 3, intended to sell

for a similar price and have a similar range. Alan Batey, GM's North America president, said in Chicago that the message from consumers after the showing of the Bolt had been clear and unequivocal: "build it". He gave no definite timescale for the start of production but said: "We are moving quickly because of its potential to completely shake up the status quo for electric vehicles."

Michelle Krebs, an analyst for

autotrader.com, the car information site, said the Bolt addressed potential electric vehicle buyers' two key concerns: range and price.

Tesla sells some pure electric vehicles with a range of more than 200 miles, but they cost at least \$63,000, even after US federal government tax incentives. While Nissan's Leaf electric vehicle costs less than \$30,000 after the tax rebate, its maximum range is about 85 miles

per charge. GM's targeted \$30,000 price is also after the effect of the tax rebate.

But, the market for electric vehicles remained uncertain, Ms Krebs said. Only 0.4 per cent of the cars and light trucks sold last year in the US were pure electric vehicles.

Sharp falls in fuel prices have further eroded demand for some of the most fuel-efficient vehicles. Average fuel prices this week are \$2.19 per US gallon,

according to the Energy Information Administration, down 40 per cent from June's peak. "Depending on where gas prices go, it's still an uphill battle for EVs," Ms Krebs said.

US vehicle makers are obliged to develop electric vehicles as part of their efforts to meet federal government targets. Tesla's shares were down 6.8 per cent yesterday to \$198.30, while GM's rose 0.56 per cent to \$37.88.

COMPANIES

Fortunes diverge for luxury brands in China

Pernod Ricard scrambles to rejig its product mix as Hermès succeeds in tapping a shift to lower-profile tastes

ADAM THOMSON — PARIS

For Europe's upmarket fashion and spirits brands, doing business in China in recent years has been anything but a life of luxury. Lower economic growth and a government crackdown on opulent gift-giving between businesspeople and officials have slashed sales growth and weakened profits.

But as brands ranging from Rémy Martin and Martell to the likes of Gucci and Louis Vuitton try to compete in the new environment, one thing has become startlingly clear: in the face of China's newfound temperance, some groups are faring better than others.

Pernod Ricard revealed yesterday that like-for-like sales of wines and spirits in China in the second half of 2014 fell 6 per cent, compared with the same period a year earlier. Shares in the Paris-based group closed more than 4 per cent down as markets swallowed the news.

That same morning, however, Hermès said that sales of its luxury leather goods, silk scarves and fashion items in Asia excluding Japan had grown 8.9 per cent on a constant-currency basis during the past three months of 2014.

The latest figures helped push annual sales for the luxury group — famed for its Kelly and Birkin leather bags — above €4bn for the first time in its 178-year history. It also meant that Hermès' revenues overtook those of rival brand Gucci, which reports its 2014 results next week.

Luca Solca, a luxury analyst at Exane BNP Paribas, says that Hermès' resilience — a year earlier, its sales in China were growing close to 16 per cent — in such changing conditions is partly because it is a relative newcomer locally.

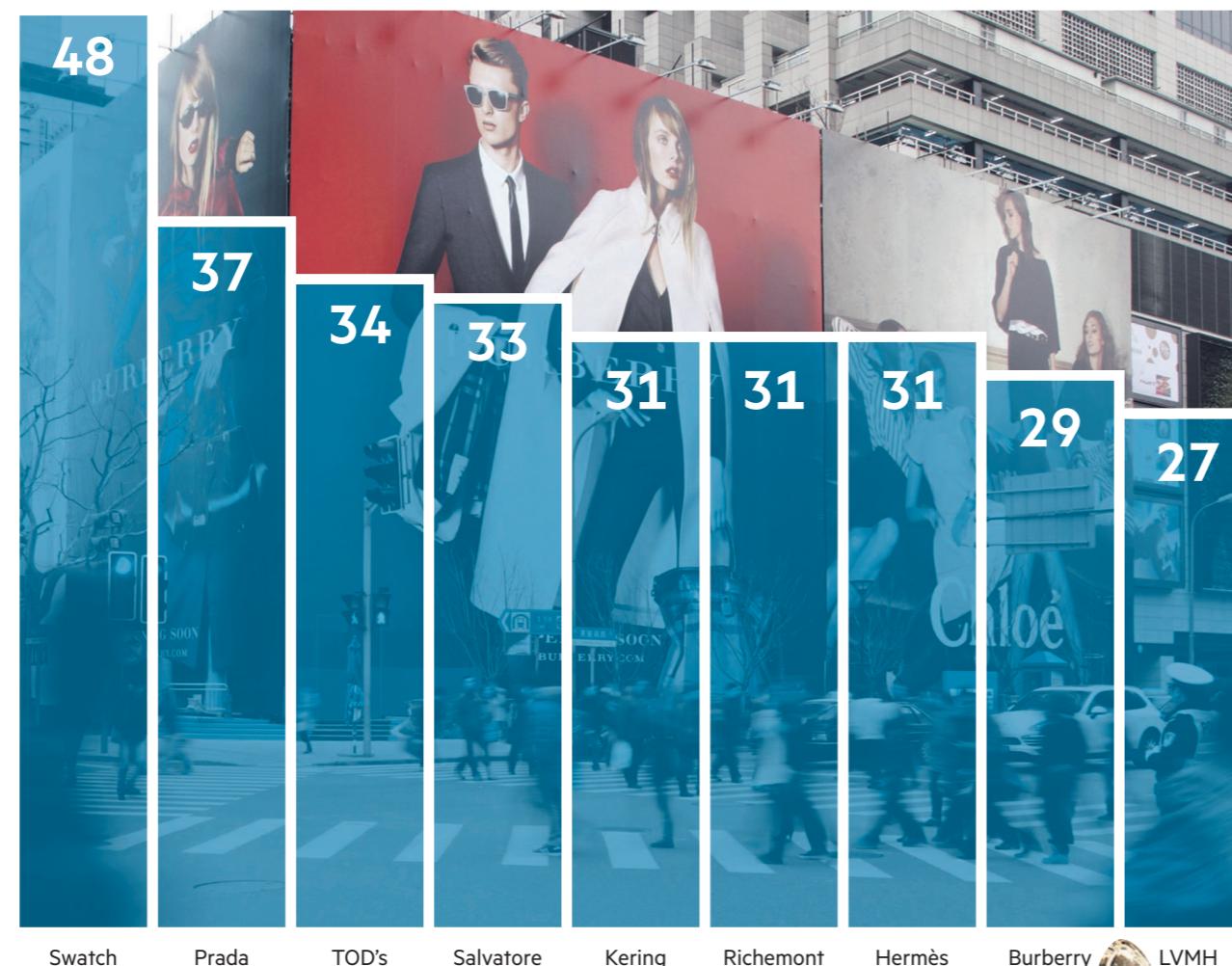
"Chinese consumers love novelty so Hermès' relatively recent presence should continue to benefit organic growth," explains Mr Solca.

Since entering the Chinese market in 1997, Hermès has also expanded slowly: its 22 stores in just 15 cities pale alongside the faster pace in recent years of brands such as Gucci and Louis Vuitton. Towards the end of last year, as Hermès inaugurated a new 1,100 sq mega-maison in a 1920s former Shanghai police station, the group announced that it planned to open no more than

Fashion victims

Luxury goods companies

Estimated sales exposure to Chinese customers, 2015 (% share)



Sources: RBC Capital Market; Bloomberg; Hurun, based on a 2015 Chinese luxury consumer survey

Chinese buyers have a 'locust field' tendency to devour a new brand before quickly moving on to another

one store a year in China over the next decade.

A second reason for Hermès' outperformance compared with other French brands is the conspicuous absence of "logo" and "bling" in its range — which have made its products a better fit with the lower-profile tastes of private consumers than the heavy-logo demands of corporate gift-givers.

As Trevor Stirling, an analyst at Bernstein who follows China's consumer trends, puts it: "You can go to a restaurant with a Hermès handbag on your

arm and not turn too many heads."

By contrast, many of the other higher-profile luxury brands have endured what Mr Solca of Exane BNP Paribas describes as a "locust field effect": the tendency of Chinese buyers to devour a new brand disproportionately, before quickly seeking another. "Chinese consumers now concentrate on what is new and then move on," says Mr Solca.

As a result, the big western luxury brands not only fail to capture Chinese consumers who have become



more sophisticated and moved on to smaller brands, they also miss out on the still-sophisticated consumers that have cut out gifting — and they cannot attract the aspirational consumers because these people are having to choose brands at lower price points.

For the likes of Pernod Ricard — and even more for the smaller and more specialised cognac maker Rémy Cointreau — China's new sobriety has been little short of brutal. To take just one example, China today accounts for between 10 per cent

and 20 per cent of Rémy's operating profit. Two years ago, it accounted for up to 40 per cent.

This fall speaks volumes about the breakneck pace of the luxury goods boom in China, when sales at both Pernod Ricard, which makes Martell cognac, and Rémy, which produces ultra-premium cognacs such as its \$2,800-a-bottle Louis XIII, pictured, were growing at 20-30 per cent a year.

So voracious was China's thirst for cognac that it went from accounting for just 13 per cent of the value of world consumption in 2003 to 45 per cent by 2013. As Mr Stirling of Bernstein says: "Everyone knew that the market had to change sooner or later."

What, then, does the future hold as Chinese tastes adapt, and wane?

For the spirits companies, one strong clue will come next week when China celebrates its new year. Pernod Ricard warned yesterday that having the celebration fall on a later date this year had already hit its quarterly sales.

In general, however, there is growing consensus that better times lie ahead.

Ian Shackleton, beverages analyst at Nomura, points out that shipments to the country have already started to recover, falling only 6 per cent during the second half of last year compared with a 9 per cent fall during the third quarter. "The underlying trend is improving," he suggests.

In the meantime, both Rémy and Pernod Ricard are scrambling to change their product mix. Rémy is trying to promote 1738, a mid-tier version of its flagship cognac that sells for about \$113 a bottle.

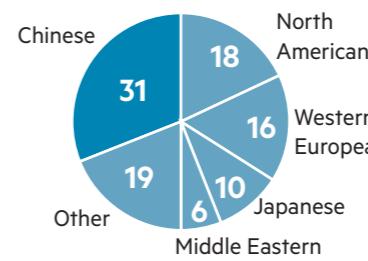
For its part, Pernod Ricard has begun to push more affordable brands of cognac in China, such as Martell Noblige — another mid-tier tipple in a modern and curvaceous bottle that retails for \$75, against a typical \$150 for its XO cognacs.

This new positioning is probably just as well. While Mr Stirling believes that 2015 will see a turnaround in China, he also admits that it is a vastly changed world.

"We are on the tipping point of a recovery," he says. "But we are never going to get back to the kind of things that was driving growth before."

Estimated luxury goods sales

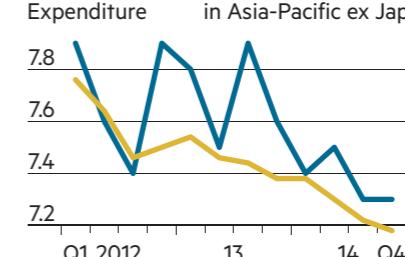
By nationality, 2015 (% share)



Chinese slowdown

Annual % change

Real GDP by expenditure



Most popular brands as gifts in China

% of respondents who answered

By Men	By Women
Apple	20
LV	13
Gucci	7
Chanel	6
Montblanc	5
Moutai	5
Hermès	4
Cartier	4
Bulgari	4
Samsung	3
Gucci	2

Photo: Tomohiro Ohsumi/Bloomberg

Travel & leisure

Chow Tai Fook plans to plough \$2.6bn into South Korean casino

SIMON MUNDY — SEOUL
AND JOSH NOBLE — HONG KONG

Chow Tai Fook Enterprises of Hong Kong plans to invest \$2.6bn in a casino project in Incheon, South Korea, which is working to attract Chinese gamblers.

The Incheon city government said yesterday it expected work to begin this year on a resort that includes a hotel, shopping mall and conference facilities.

Chow Tai Fook is controlled by the family of Cheng Yu-tung, whose hotels, shopping malls and construction businesses put him fifth on Asia's rich list, according to Forbes. The investment group's only listed entity, Chow Tai Fook Jewellery, is the world's largest jeweller by market capitalisation.

The group has also been considering casino-related investments in Vietnam, and has agreed a deal to build a gaming resort in Brisbane, Australia.

Construction in Incheon is expected to proceed in two phases, set to be completed in 2019 and 2022.

The proposal is subject to approval by Seoul, which said last month that it expected to approve two foreigners-only casino projects this year.

South Korea restricts the ability of its citizens to gamble, but has identified casinos as a means to boost Chinese tourism as it seeks to develop the services sector and lessen a reliance on manufactured exports. Chinese tourists

have flooded into South Korea in the past decade. Their numbers jumped 41 per cent last year to 6.1m and make up a third of all overseas visitors, says the Korea Tourism Organisation.

Casino operators are increasingly looking beyond Macau for Asian growth. The once booming gaming sector has been driven largely by Chinese who are pushed to go abroad by their country's ban on gambling.

Last year Macau suffered its first decline in annual gaming revenue as Beijing's crackdown on corruption kept China's VIP gamblers away. Analysts expect the lean times to continue, with rating agency Standard & Poor's forecasting a 15 per cent to 20 per cent fall in gaming revenue for the sector in the first half of 2015.

The anti-corruption drive has also sparked concern among investors in Paradise and Grand Korea Leisure, which operate South Korea's foreigners-only casinos. Shares in both companies fell sharply on Monday after reports that Beijing would launch a drive against the marketing of gambling by foreign casino groups.

But analysts say South Korea's proximity to northeastern Chinese cities means Paradise and GKL are well placed to win customers. The number of visitors from China to the island of Jeju, which boasts eight casinos and a visa-free regime for Chinese tourists, rose from 175,000 in 2008 to 1.8m in 2013.

Last March South Korea gave approval for the first time to a foreign-owned casino project, a joint venture between Caesars Entertainment of the US and Lippo Ltd, listed in Hong Kong. The government has moved to relax minimum credit rating requirements for foreign casino operators in an effort to attract more interest.

South Korea's attraction to casino operators will be limited as long as they cannot admit locals, Alan Feldman of MGM Resorts International told the FT last year. The only South Korean casino licensed to accept local custom is in a remote mountain resort several hours' journey from the nearest big city.



Seoul has identified casinos as a way of bolstering Chinese tourism


TOTAL
COMMITTED TO BETTER ENERGY

FULL-YEAR 2014 RESULTS



"After a long period of stability around \$110 per barrel, oil prices fell dramatically in the second half of 2014, ending the year at \$55 per barrel. In this context, Total generated adjusted net results of \$12.8 billion, a decrease of 10% compared to the previous year. Given the current economic environment the company recognized after-tax impairments of about \$6.5 billion at the end of the year, essentially related to Canadian oil sands, unconventional gas, notably in the United States, and refining in Europe."

The Upstream segment returned to growth with the start-up of its deep-offshore CLOV field in Angola in the second half of 2014. The Refining & Chemicals segment achieved its profitability target one year ahead of schedule and reported a remarkable set of results thanks to the success of its restructuring program and strong operational performance.

After delivering on its commitment to reduce expenditures in 2014, all of the Group's segments are expanding their cost-cutting programs to get through this period, with no compromise on the absolute priority to safety. Total successfully completed its 2012-14 asset sale program and plans to accelerate the execution of its 2015-17 asset sale program. As the first international company to enter the new ADCO concession in Abu Dhabi, Total demonstrates its ability to access resources under good conditions and create strong partnerships in a strategic region. With its high-quality teams, financial strength and ability to adapt, the Group is focused for the short-term on generating cash flow and reducing its breakeven point, and for the medium term confirms its growth strategy."

Patrick Pouyanné
Chief Executive Officer

2014 MAIN RESULTS

Adjusted net income	Hydrocarbon production	Investments	Net-debt-to-equity ratio	2014 Dividend
12.8 BILLION DOLLARS	2,146 THOUSAND BARRELS OF OIL EQUIVALENT PER DAY	26.4 BILLION DOLLARS	31% ON DECEMBER 31, 2014	2.44 EUROS/SHAKE ⁽¹⁾ (+2.5% compared to 2013)

(1) Pending approval at the May 29, 2015 Annual Shareholders' Meeting, the ex-dividend date for the remainder of the 2014 dividend (0.61 €/share) will be June 8, 2015. The Board of Directors will also propose to the Shareholders' Meeting the alternative for shareholders to receive the remainder in cash or new shares benefiting from a 10% discount. The payment date will be as from July 1, 2015.

INDIVIDUAL SHAREHOLDER RELATIONS

International phone: +33 1 47 44 24 02
E-mail: actionnairesindividuels@total.com
Website: www.total.com/en/investors
Total Investors Application for iPad and smartphone

SHAREHOLDERS' CALENDAR

March 23, 2015 | Ex-dividend date for the 3rd 2014 interim dividend
April 25, 2015 | VFB Congress in Brussels (in Belgium)
April 28, 2015 | First Quarter 2015 Results
May 29, 2015 | 2015 Annual Shareholders' Meeting in Paris



Banks

Credit Suisse moves to offset rise in franc

Shares surge 9% on better leverage outlook and plans to offload assets

LAURA NOONAN — LONDON

MADISON MARRIAGE — ZURICH

Credit Suisse promised to cut an extra SFr50bn-SFr70bn (\$54bn-\$75bn) of assets this year and said it would pay some dividends in shares, sending the bank's stock up more than 9 per cent as investors' fears about its capital position eased.

The bank's share price has underperformed rivals amid concerns over its high leverage and its commitment to capital-intensive investment banking.

"Hopefully a lot of things we're announcing today will help to address



Switzerland's second-largest lender is rolling out efficiencies

that," Brady Dougan, chief executive, told the Financial Times after the bank said it would hold 2014's dividend steady at SFr0.70, against consensus expectations of SFr0.61.

Switzerland's second-largest lender also promised SFr200m of efficiencies to counter the appreciating Swiss franc as it reported fourth-quarter net profits slightly above analysts' expectations.

Its shares closed up 9.1 per cent at SFr21.60.

"Expectations were relatively low," Kian Abouhossein of JPMorgan said. "There were some concerns that Credit Suisse could potentially raise capital today in the market. That's why you've seen the very strong price performance today."

Mr Abouhossein said the bank's progress in cutting its leverage in the

fourth quarter — when it reduced assets by SFr51bn — and its higher targets for cutting assets this year were the main drivers of the share price rise, along with its decision to build capital by offering some dividends in shares.

Leverage is in the spotlight because Swiss authorities are considering rules that could cap banks' assets at a lower multiple of total equity. Mr Dougan said he was confident the bank would clear the hurdle.

Credit Suisse said the Swiss franc tur-

moil would wipe 3 per cent off 2015's earnings, and promised swift measures to counter it. These would include some job losses in its private bank, while some jobs would be moved out of Switzerland.

There would be no extra cuts at Credit Suisse's investment bank, since its expenses were overwhelmingly outside Switzerland.

The bank cut group-wide 2014 bonuses by 9 per cent, top management have agreed to a 20 per cent cut in their bonuses, and its board is taking a 25 per cent cut in total pay.

Fourth-quarter net income of SFr921m was comfortably ahead of analysts' expectations of SFr869m.

In the fourth quarter of 2013, Credit Suisse had reported a net loss attributable to shareholders of SFr476m.

Reduction in Credit Suisse's assets in the fourth quarter of 2014

Cut in management bonuses, compared with group-wide fall of 9% for last year

Swiss franc turmoil is set to wipe 3% off earnings, with measures to counter that including job losses

Industrial engineering. Activism

Loeb thrusts Fanuc into uneasy spotlight

Calls for change at Japan's secretive factory robot maker appear doomed to fail

KANA INAGAKI — TOKYO

Long hidden behind a veil of secrecy, Fanuc, the world's biggest maker of factory robots, has been thrust into an uncomfortable spotlight by Daniel Loeb, the activist investor.

In the eyes of many investors, Mr Loeb's latest campaign to shake up one of Japan's most reclusive companies — it has shied away from engaging with shareholders — appears doomed to fail.

But hopes of change boosted Fanuc's shares to a record high, with the stock closing up 6.2 per cent yesterday.

This week Third Point, the hedge fund run by Mr Loeb, revealed it had bought a stake in Fanuc and urged it to make better use of its \$8.5bn cash pile by buying back shares. Fanuc responded yesterday with typical brevity, acknowledging a letter by Mr Loeb in early February but declining to comment further.

Despite a culture of secrecy, family-run Fanuc and its "army of yellow robots" have long fascinated investors because of its technological innovation and stellar growth; Third Point's letter compared the company with Apple. Spun out of Fujitsu in 1972, Fanuc controls about 60 per cent of the global market for computerised numerical controls, or the brains of robots. Its equipment is used in factories worldwide to assemble smartphones by Apple, Samsung Electronics and Xiaomi.

With an equity capital ratio, a measure of financial strength, of 90 per cent, profit margins of 40 per cent, and a market



His son, Yoshiharu, has been the company's president since 2003 and analysts say he is running the company more freely and is more sensitive to shareholders.

Fanuc declined to comment on changes in management.

capitalisation of \$44bn, Fanuc became a stock hard to ignore when investing in Japan. Foreign investors own about half of Fanuc's shares.

For the fiscal year to March the company expects a 67 per cent rise in net profit to Y185bn (\$1.6bn), buoyed by machinery demand in North America and growing sales of robots in China, where labour costs are rising. Goldman Sachs analysts say the use of aluminium in the auto industry will further expand Fanuc's robot business in North America, with orders already coming from Ford and Tesla.

Analysts say the growth came on the back of an ultra-focused corporate culture cultivated by its charismatic founder and honorary chairman, Seiemon Inaba, a former Fujitsu engineer. The 89-year-old Mr Inaba, who wielded influence until very recently, pushed his engineers to devote their efforts to robot making, deplored distractions from outside — including investor voices.

Inspired by IBM, Mr Inaba moved Fanuc's headquarters and all of its divisions from Tokyo to the foot of Mount Fuji in the late 1980s, isolating them in a forest. Marking another of Mr Inaba's obsessions, all of Fanuc's buildings, plus employee uniforms, are yellow.

The company's management rarely appears before analysts and investors, and email correspondence is restricted. But Fanuc watchers say subtle changes are starting to occur since Mr Inaba effectively retired last year. According to Fanuc documents, he was "dismissed" from key positions at its various subsidiaries.

His son, Yoshiharu, has been the company's president since 2003 and analysts say he is running the company more freely and is more sensitive to shareholders.

Fanuc declined to comment on changes in management.



Fine fears Commerzbank warns over US legal provision

Commerzbank warned that it could take further provisions for legal risks in the US, where it is under investigation for allegedly breaching American sanctions on Iran and Sudan, and anti-money-laundering rules.

The Frankfurt bank, unveiling preliminary results for 2014, said it had made provisions of €484m last year, making its total legal provisions €1.4bn.

Talks with US authorities to resolve the two issues have intensified after a lull, and chief financial officer Stephan Engels said the bank could add extra provisions to its 2014 numbers if there was further progress before its accounts were finalised.

People familiar with the matter have previously told the Financial Times that Commerzbank and the US authorities were discussing a settlement involving the German bank paying \$1bn in fines and signing a deferred prosecution agreement.

Overall in 2014, Commerzbank reported €602m in net profit, up from €81m in 2013, largely on the back of lower restructuring charges. The bank's final profits for 2014 will be lower if it takes further provisions.

The bank, which is a key lender to the small and medium-sized businesses that make up the backbone of Germany's economy, said that in the last three months of 2014, net profit came to €77m, up from €64m a year earlier.

The improvement was driven by Commerzbank setting aside less money to cover for the risk that loans might go bad, as well as a tax credit. It said its core tier one capital ratio — a gauge of financial strength — rose to 9.5 per cent at the end of the year, up from 9 per cent at the end of 2013.

James Shotter

Marius Becker/epa

Legal Notices

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION)
COMPANIES COURT NO 808 OF 2015

IN THE MATTER OF
NIPPONKO INSURANCE COMPANY (EUROPE) LIMITED
AND

IN THE MATTER OF
UNIONAMERICA INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
AND

IN THE MATTER OF
THE FINANCIAL SERVICES AND MARKETS ACT 2000
NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on 29 January 2015 Nipponko Insurance Company (Europe) Limited ("NKE") applied to the High Court of Justice for:

1. An Order under Part VII of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (the "Act") sanctioning a scheme (the "Scheme") providing for the transfer to Unionamerica Insurance Company Limited ("Ua") of the business of NKE which was originally written by Nippon Insurance Company of Europe Limited (formerly the Nippon Fire and Marine Insurance Company (U.K.) Limited) through the agency of Oberon Underwriters Limited (the "Transferred Business"); and

2. An Order making ancillary provision in connection with the implementation of the Scheme under Section 112 of the Act.

The proposed transfer will result in the Transferred Business formerly carried on by NKE being carried on by Ua. The proposed transfer will secure the continuation by or against Ua of any judicial, quasi-judicial, administrative or arbitration proceedings or any complaint or claim to any ombudsman or other proceedings for the resolution of a dispute or claim (whether current or future) by or against NKE that relate to rights and obligations in respect of the Transferred Business. All claims being dealt with before the transfer on behalf of NKE in relation to such business will following the transfer continue to be dealt with by Ua. All such claims arising after the transfer will be dealt with by Ua.

The application is directed to be heard before the Companies Court Judge at 7 Rolls Buildings, Royal Courts of Justice, Fetter Lane, London, EC4A 1NL on 30 March 2015 and any person (including staff employed in the performance of NKE's business or Ua's business) who alleges that he or she would be adversely affected by the carrying out of the Scheme is entitled to object in writing or may appear at the time of that hearing in person or by Counsel. Any person who intends to make written objections or so to appear and any policyholder or reinsured of NKE or Ua who objects to the Scheme but does not intend to object in writing or so to appear, is requested to give not less than two clear days' prior notice in writing of such intention or objection, and the reasons therefor, to the solicitors named below.

Copies of a report on the terms of the Scheme prepared pursuant to Section 109 of the Act (the "Independent Expert's Report") and a statement setting out the terms of the Scheme and containing a summary of the Independent Expert's Report will be provided free of charge by the solicitors named below. These documents may also be accessed at the following web address: www.nipponkoaeurope.co.uk.

DATED THIS 13th day of February 2015

Hogan Lovells International LLP

Atlantic House

Holborn Viaduct

London EC1A 2FG

Tel: +44(0) 20 7296 2000

Fax: +44(0) 20 7296 2001

Ref: CA/EG/TJG

Solicitors for NKE

Mining

Jindal and Adani shortlisted amid India's first coal auctions

JAMES CRABTREE — MUMBAI

Billionaires Naveen Jindal and Gautam Adani head a list of 154 bidders in India's first coal auctions, amid a fiercely competitive process that starts this weekend with far-reaching implications for the country's battered metals and power sectors.

Yesterday, India's government revealed the companies eligible to bid for 25 mines, the start of a long process in which more than 100 licences will be sold or allocated to industrial groups suffering from chronic fuel shortages.

Many of India's most prominent conglomerates were shortlisted, including Mr Jindal's Jindal Steel and Power and Mr Adani's Adani Group, alongside the Aditya Birla Group, Reliance Power and London-listed Vedanta Resources.

No major global natural resources groups applied, largely because India forbids commercial mining, only allowing companies to extract coal to supply industrial projects that they also own.

India hopes that the auctions will end a crisis that began last August when its supreme court cancelled more than 200 coal licences awarded to industrial groups, describing their allocation as "arbitrary and illegal".

The shock move hit shares in compa-

nies owned by major industrialists. It followed a long-running investigation into what is often called India's "coal scam", in which government auditors alleged that mines were allocated at below market rates.

The new auction — the first of its kind in India — has implications far beyond the coal sector, given the same model will now be used for other mineral resources, including iron ore.

"Bidding is going to be very, very competitive, because all these guys are so anxious to get coal," said Rakesh Arora at Macquarie Securities in Mumbai. "Now they are forced to rely on expensive imports, so they are willing to bid maybe four or five times more than what you would pay for coal in South Africa or Australia on a per tonne basis."

The auction's complex rules make its likely total value hard to calculate, analysts said. The mines are split into two categories, for instance, with different methods to allocate those destined for power generation, and others to be used in sectors such as steel or cement.

However, Kameswara Rao, a mining expert at PwC, estimated the full auction process could yield about \$17bn, although these payments would be made over the life of the mines, averaging around 30 years.

ALISTAIR GRAY — LONDON
MADISON MARRIAGE — ZURICH

The chief executive of Zurich Insurance has pledged to "do more" to boost profitability after the group missed forecasts with a 20 per cent drop in fourth-quarter net income.

Shares in Zurich, Europe's third-largest insurer by market value, had fallen 3.3 per cent by early afternoon following the results that the Swiss group blamed on a "prolonged low yield and low-growth" macroeconomic environment.

"The miss versus consensus [expectations] on business operating profit is considerable," said Martin Moeller, head of Swiss and global equity at the private bank Union Bancaire Privée in Geneva, which holds Zurich shares.

Zurich produced a return on equity of 11 per cent in the quarter — beneath a targeted range of 12-14 per cent. "We need to do more to improve our profitability," Martin Senn, chief executive, told investors yesterday. "We have actions under way across the business."

Zurich is already planning to generate annual cost savings of \$250m by the end of this year, including making 300 redundancies. The company did not spell out any additional cost saving plans yesterday, although it has pledged

General financial

Fidelity posts record profits despite large outflows

DAVID OAKLEY AND STEPHEN FOLEY

Fidelity Investments reported record profits for 2014, despite net outflows of \$6bn, as one of the world's biggest active fund managers lost market share to index trackers and niche rivals.

The US group said yesterday that operating profits rose 29 per cent to \$3.4bn, while revenues increased 9 per cent to \$14.9bn. But it suffered big outflows as investors switched money into passively run funds.

While its core asset management business has been under pressure, Fidelity has expanded operations that administer pension funds and brokerage services for private investors. Assets directly managed by the firm were up 4 per cent to \$2.03tn, while the total assets that it administers increased 10 per cent to \$5.06tn.

The annual results are the first since Abigail Johnson formally assumed the chief executive role at Fidelity from her father, Ned, who helped build the business into one of the most powerful brands in investment management.

A net \$16bn was withdrawn from equity products as Vanguard, the pioneer of low-cost index funds, captured a large part of its business. The exchange traded fund business and bond products in part offset this.

Sector-based equity products, including ETFs, registered net deposits of \$6.6bn and its bond products posted net inflows of \$2bn, a turnaround for the fixed-income business which suffered heavy withdrawals in 2013.

The Boston group is the largest administrator of US pension funds and also manages 7.8m brokerage accounts for personal investors around the world under an "open architecture" model that gives clients access to funds from Fidelity and other asset managers.

Analysts say investors are splitting their money between cheap index funds and smaller active managers whose more nimble size means they can place a smaller number of concentrated bets.

The net outflows from its directly managed funds meant the firm was "not where we want to be", Charles Morrison, the asset management unit president, wrote in the report to shareholders.

Ms Johnson has added executive responsibilities over the past decade, after an apprenticeship that began as a junior research analyst in 1988.

Mr Johnson, 84, who is chairman, said that "continuous improvement" was "more necessary than ever in today's hyper-competitive markets".

Fidelity reports financial results less regularly

Oil & gas

Total to axe UK refinery jobs and sell \$5bn of assets

Group speeds up revamp and cost-cutting drive in reaction to plunging crude

CHRISTOPHER ADAMS — ENERGY EDITOR

France's Total is to cut 180 jobs at Britain's Lindsey refinery and embark on a shake up of its lossmaking French sites, as it accelerates plans to shed billions of dollars of assets after crude's plunge.

The energy group said it could not

rule out compulsory redundancies at Lindsey in Lincolnshire, in contrast to its French refineries, where no workers will be laid off.

Total, the last of the big six oil majors to issue results, reported fourth-quarter adjusted net income of \$2.8bn, down 17 per cent compared with the same period in 2013.

This performance was at the top end of analysts' forecasts, but the company took a \$6.5bn impairment charge on its Canadian oil-sands business, US shale

gas and troubled European refining operations. That charge and other one-off items led to a headline loss of \$5.7bn for the fourth quarter, against a profit of \$2.2bn one year ago.

Total confirmed that it would cut capital spending this year by 10 per cent, to between \$23bn and \$24bn, as it seeks — like its rivals — to shore up cash flows and cover dividend payouts.

The group's shares closed up almost 1 per cent at €47.35. Total said that under Patrick Pouyanne, its new chief

executive, it would accelerate and deepen a cost-cutting programme initiated by his predecessor, the late Christophe de Margerie. This would include disposals of \$5bn of assets this year, including some in the North Sea, where Mr Pouyanne said that Total was investing "almost zero" in mature fields.

He announced a hiring freeze across the group and plans to cut staff at Total's headquarters by 15 per cent by 2017.

These measures would contribute to a decline of 2,000 in overall employee

numbers this year. Total said that its "strong and immediate response" to the fall in oil prices would generate \$8bn in cash this year, reducing its "break even" price — the minimum level at which it produces oil profitably — by \$40 a barrel.

The group is to halve capacity — a reduction of 5m tonnes a year — at the Lindsey refinery, and the number of staff will fall from 580 to 400 by the end of next year.

Total will consult on voluntary departures, early retirement and on finding employees other roles within the group.

Total plans £33m of investment to improve the refinery's efficiency, with a further £150m to be spent over the next five years.

However, the Unite union urged the company to rethink its plans to cut jobs. Tony Burke, assistant general secretary, said: "Rather than lose skilled workers, Unite believes that oil companies should look to the future and maintain a skilled workforce ready for any upturn."

Travel & leisure. Culture clash

Indian partnership leaves sour taste for McDonald's

Legal battle over control of 185 outlets has brought expansion in the country to a standstill

AMY KAZMIN — NEW DELHI

The Golden Arches are the same, but McDonald's menus in India would look decidedly odd to anyone from the fast-food chain's US homeland. There are no hamburgers on them.

When the company opened its first restaurants on the subcontinent in 1996 — arguably before local tastes, or wallets, were ready — it replaced its signature beefburgers with mutton, potato and paneer alternatives out of sensitivity to the country's Hindu majority, for whom cows are sacred.

Today, western-style fast food is being embraced by a new generation of Indian youth. But, rather than profiting from its early-mover advantage, McDonald's has found its Indian expansion stymied by a bitter dispute with an estranged local partner.

A legal battle with businessman Vikram Bakshi over control of 185 McDonald's outlets has brought McDonald's expansion in half of the country — including Delhi and the prosperous states of Haryana and Punjab — to a standstill.

It is one of many challenges awaiting the company's incoming chief executive Steve Easterbrook, who has been tasked with reviving the brand after a 4.8 per cent drop in same-store sales in Asia Pacific, the Middle East and Africa in the past quarter.

On Monday, the group reported a further 12.6 per cent fall in sales in the region in January, year on year, as it continued to deal with problems ranging from food safety concerns in China to changing tastes in the US.

India is still a small outpost in McDonald's global empire. But rivals such as Burger King, Wendy's and Carl's Jr and western pizza franchise Domino's have been expanding via branch openings — drawn to a fast-food market of 1.3bn people, half of whom are under age 25.

McDonald's has struggled to keep pace as its joint venture with Mr Bakshi remains mired in Indian litigation that could take years to play out.

Although McDonald's says it cannot comment on India or its differences with Mr Bakshi because of the continuing legal process, one of its filings with India's Company Law Board — which hears business disputes — states: "The trust and faith reposed in [Mr Bakshi by McDonald's], which had been steadily depleting, is now irretrievably lost."

In the mid-1990s, it seemed very dif-



Currying favour: McDonald's Indian outlets cater to local tastes by serving mutton, potato and paneer dishes in place of the usual menu — Pankaj Nangia/Bloomberg

ferent. McDonald's entered India through separate 50-50 joint ventures with two businessmen. It chose Mr Bakshi, a Delhi-based real estate investor, for the north and east, and Amit Jatia, scion of a Mumbai-based industrial family, for the south and west.

After some initial problems catering for local palates — its mutton burgers proved too rubbery and incompatible

with "special sauce" — sales began to pick up. By 2012, Mr Jatia's Hardcastle Restaurants had become a full franchisee, through a friendly buyout of McDonald's stake in their venture. Today, Hardcastle has 185 outlets — 85 of which opened in the past three years — and it plans to open between 175 and 250 more by 2020.

But McDonald's relationship with Mr

Burger kings
Locals put western chains on menu when they eat out

As their country's economy continues to grow rapidly, more Indians are eating out — mostly at local restaurants serving quick, filling meals at a reasonable price.

According to Euromonitor, India's quick-service restaurant market was estimated at Rs95bn (\$16bn) last year, up from Rs486bn in 2008. Most of these meals are still provided by independent, family-owned restaurants, sidewalk food stalls or small local chains with a few outlets.

But many western restaurant chains sense a growing opportunity. Brands such as McDonald's, KFC and Subway accounted for a meagre 4 per cent of

total quick-service restaurant sales last year, but that was up from 2.5 per cent in 2008. This share is expected to grow, as customers opt for chains offering high levels of hygiene, convenience and predictability.

Burger King has just opened its first 10 Indian outlets, in Delhi and Mumbai. Carl's Jr is expected to launch in India in April. Wendy's will soon follow suit.

Foreign brands have already tasted success in the pizza market. Last year, Indians ate Rs275bn worth of pizza, up from Rs9.5bn in 2008 — and Domino's cooked most of them. It is the market leader with a 67 per cent share of the Indian pizza market, followed by Yum Brands' Pizza Hut, with an 18 per cent share. But, Yum is trying to catch up: it has just announced plans to open another 100 Pizza Hut outlets in India over the next 12 months.

It also alleged that Mr Bakshi lost focus on McDonald's by pursuing pri-

Bakshi had soured, due to a clash of business cultures and expectations.

"I guess I was never an easy person to work with," says Mr Bakshi in an interview with the Financial Times. "I was not the usual subservient partner that most franchisers look at."

Back in 2008, McDonald's had approached Mr Bakshi about buying out his half of the joint venture, which is called Connaught Plaza Restaurants. He was initially amenable, until McDonald's offered \$5m — roughly equal to his original investment 13 years earlier.

A year later, Grant Thornton valued the joint venture, which then boasted 85 outlets, at \$330m excluding debts. Mr Bakshi told McDonald's any negotiation for his half would have to start at \$100m. Matters came to a head in August 2013, when McDonald's nominees on the Connaught board refused to support Mr Bakshi's re-election as managing director. McDonald's tried to exercise a clause giving it an option to buy him out. Mr Bakshi went to court.

In a September 2013 filing to the Company Law Board, McDonald's accused Mr Bakshi of violating their partnership agreement by leasing properties in Delhi to McDonald's rivals, including Domino's, Dunkin' Donuts and India's own Café Coffee Day.

It also alleged that Mr Bakshi lost focus on McDonald's by pursuing pri-

vate interests in property and hospitality; improperly pledged his stake of the joint venture as collateral for an unrelated loan; and took Rs70m out of the business for a private transaction, although the money was later returned.

In his legal rejoinder, Mr Bakshi denies wrongdoing and calls McDonald's claims "stale, unfounded and baseless". His petition says McDonald's knew of his other business interests and never objected to them. He says he took out the Rs70m to facilitate the opening of a McDonald's outlet — with the US company's prior knowledge — and never pledged his shares against any loan.

With the legal battle raging, Mr Bakshi says he and his wife are still effectively running the chain's day-to-day affairs.

But the dispute has taken its toll. Just nine new McDonald's opened in the disputed region in 2014 and, at most, seven will open this year.

"There is no vibrancy in the restaurants," Mr Bakshi says. "With limited growth and no direction, the incentive to excel is completely missing."

As McDonald's waits for the legal process to unfold, Mr Bakshi admits customers are not "lovin' it" as much as the company's advertising suggests. "Our regular customers . . . are constantly flooding our website with complaints," he says.

Technology hardware

Qualcomm faces South Korea antitrust probe

SIMON MUNDY AND SONG JUNG-A — SEOUL

South Korean competition authorities are investigating Qualcomm after the US chip designer's record Rmb6.1bn (\$977m) settlement in China over claims that it abused its dominant market position in wireless chips.

South Korea's three smartphone producers — Samsung Electronics, LG Electronics and Pantech — rely heavily on Qualcomm's semiconductors to provide their higher-end handsets with processing power and fast data connections on 3G and 4G networks.

But the smartphone makers have been unhappy with the level of the royalties they have had to pay to Qualcomm, and voiced these concerns to South Korea's Fair Trade Commission, according to a person with knowledge of the complaints. The FTC has now launched a probe into Qualcomm, another person familiar with the situation said yesterday.

News of the investigation will bolster suggestions that Qualcomm's deal with

China's National Development and Reform Commission this week could have ramifications elsewhere.

Monday's deal, as well as being the biggest fine levied by the NDRC, obliges Qualcomm to reduce the royalties that Chinese handset makers pay by more than a third. The manufacturer of a 4G-capable smartphone, for example, will now pay Qualcomm no more than 2.28

per cent of the handset's wholesale price, down from the 3.5 per cent rate Qualcomm previously demanded.

Analysts believe Samsung's new Galaxy S6 phone will use only Samsung processors, after reported overheating problems with Qualcomm's newest processor design. The device is likely to include a stand-alone Qualcomm modem, a deviation from the US group's "bundling" policy, Mr Newman said.



Legal Notices

STORM FUNDING LIMITED
[In Administration]
NOTICE OF INTENDED DIVIDEND PURSUANT TO RULE 2.95 OF THE INSOLVENCY RULES 1986
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Rule 2.95 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that the Joint Administrators of Storm Funding Limited ("Storm") intend to make a distribution (by way of paying an interim dividend) to the preferential creditors (if any) and to the unsecured, non-preferential creditors of Storm.
Proof of claim may be lodged at any point up to (and including) 6 March 2015, the last date for proving claims, however, creditors are requested to lodge their proofs of debt at the earliest possible opportunity.
Any proof so proving is required, if so requested, to provide such further details or produce such documents or other evidence as may appear to the Joint Administrators to be necessary.
The Joint Administrators will not be obliged to deal with proofs lodged after the last date for proving but may do so if they think fit.
The Joint Administrators intend to make a distribution within the period of two months from the last date for proving claims.
For further information, contact details, and proof of debt forms, please visit <http://www.pwco.co.uk/business-recovery/administrations/> and return a proof of debt form, together with relevant supporting documents to PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 7 More London Riverside, London, SE1 2RT marked for the attention of Sean Dredos, stormclaims@uk.pwc.com.
Rule 2.95(2)(c) of the Insolvency Rules 1986 requires the Joint Administrators to state in this notice the value of the prescribed part of the debts of Storm which are to be paid by the distribution to be made on the satisfaction of Storm's unsecured debts pursuant to section 176 of the Insolvency Act 1986. There are no floating charges over the assets of Storm and accordingly, there shall be no prescribed part. All of the net recoveries will be available for the satisfaction of Storm's unsecured debts.
Dated 13 February 2015
D Y Schwarzmuller, Joint Administrator

Contracts & Tenders

INVITATION TO BID
Ministry of Health of Albania invites interested investors domestic and / or foreign to participate in competitive selection procedures for the concession / public private partnership of integrated services for providing personalized set of sterile surgical instruments, single-use sterile medical devices/materials (clothing) in surgical wards, biological risk waste treatment and decontamination/disinfection of surgical wards.

Location and ways of attracting the bidding documents shall be made pursuant to the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 130, dated 03.12.2014 "On the performance electronic bidding procedures Concession / Public Private Partnership".

Interested bidders may be recognized with the standard documents competitive procedure on the official website of the Public Procurement Agency: www.app.gov.al.

The duration of the concession / public private partnership is 10 years.

For further information regarding to the procedure please contact us:

Contact Information: +91 42 376178;

Contact person: Ms. Marsela Serjani

E-mail: Marsela.Serjani@shendetesa.gov.al

bledar.karoli@moe.gov.al

Bids will be charged (upload) the official address of PPA: www.app.gov.al no later than date_March 30th, 2015, time 12:00 h.

Any bid charged after this deadline will not be accepted.

BHARAT HEAVY ELECTRICALS LIMITED
(A Government of India Undertaking)

TRANSMISSION BUSINESS GROUP, TBMM
Tower A, 5th Floor, Advant Navis IT Business Park, Plot No. 7, Sector-142, Expressway, Noida Distt. Gautam Buddha Nagar, U.P.-201305 Phone: 0120-6748480, 8477 : e-mail: gaurav.agarwal@bhel.in, rkgangal@bhel.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

BHD BEL invites tenders for procurement of lattice structure, pipe structure, foundation bolt, shield wire, surge arrestor, MS Rod, LT Cables & Isolators, CT, CVT etc. as per NIT Nos. 21381, 21387, 21391, 21388, 21394, 21390, 21384, 21389, 21379, 21402 & 21409, 21419, 21420.

For detailed information, please visit website www.bhbel.com. All corrigenda, addenda, amendments, times extensions, clarifications etc. to the tender will be hosted on website only. Bidders should regularly visit website to keep themselves updated.

BHD BEL invites MSME suppliers for registration for various items required mainly for HV/EHV (66 kV to 765 kV) Switchyards / Sub-station & also for other Transmission System Projects. Detailed list of items and Supplier Registration Forms are available at www.bhbel.com under 'Supplier Registration'.

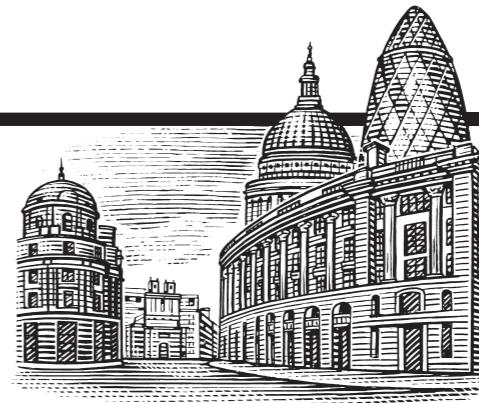
Sr. Engineer (TBMM)

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Lombard

UK COMPANIES



Two's a duopoly, three's awkward for Kirstie, Phil and Zoopla

Jonathan
Guthrie



Kirstie Allsopp: Welcome to *Disruption, Disruption, Disruption*, the property show for estate agents.

Phil Spencer: Today we're helping Des Rez find a dream home for his "For Sale" listings.

Kirstie: We showed Des three gorgeous websites: traditional Rightmove, up-and-coming Zoopla and OntheMarket, a new build. What did you think, Des?

Des Rez: Rightmove and Zoopla charged me thousands just to come through the front door. Cheek!

Phil: You get what you pay for, Des. They're a dominant double act with expensive lifestyles, like Kirstie and me. They've margins of 74 per cent and 64 per cent to maintain.

Kirstie: What about OntheMarket, the website set up by estate agents to disrupt the duopoly?

Des: I fancy a bit of that.

Phil: That's what I say about Kirstie.

Kirstie: Oh Phil, you adorable hunk of rough! I should have you horsewhipped by the footmen! But Des, OntheMarket only lets you advertise with one other portal.

Des: (embarrassed) I'd use Rightmove, which gets 80 per cent of the traffic, and drop Zoopla.

Phil: You wouldn't be alone. Zoopla says its membership has slumped 11 per cent. OntheMarket only launched on January 26.

Kirstie: Chief executive Alex Chesterman says agents will crawl back to Zoopla when they start losing business. He's promising users "further exciting features".

Des: The feature that would excite me most would be a price cut.

Phil: The stock market expects that. Zoopla's shares bounced back from a 5 per cent drop on Thursday. But they're still 15.5 per cent below last year's float price.

Des: So running property websites isn't money for old rope any more?

Phil: Good job making property programmes laden with unresolved sexual tension still is.

Kirstie: Honestly, Phil, sometimes I could spank you!

Lucky break

Ireland last year abolished the Double Irish, a tax loophole for multinationals. But it looks set to reassert its appeal to tax-thrifty globalisers by sparing drugs group Shire about \$310m in tax on a \$1.6bn break fee.

In October, AbbVie, a US rival, canned plans for a £32bn takeover of Shire, which is listed in London, tax domiciled in Dublin and active in the US. Piquantly, this was the result of a US crackdown on tax-saving "inversion" deals, which move tax domiciles out of the land of the free.

AbbVie had agreed to pay Shire compensation if it walked away. Such break-fee agreements are far from automatic and may imply the bidder is very keen on a target. Free of tax at a typical rate of 19 per cent, the money is a nice fillip for shareholders.

Usually, tax would be paid. For example, Deutsche Telekom shelled out about 30 per cent on a cash break fee of €2.9bn from AT&T in 2011, when the US telecoms group failed to buy DT subsidiary T-Mobile.

Ireland, evidently, is different. Meanwhile, thanks to strong results,

Shire shares have risen to about £50 each, only a shade below AbbVie's final bid. For Shire investors, as for Dr Pangloss, all things are for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

Rio passes Wolfson test

The broad church of stock-market capitalism is schismatic on buybacks. One heretic-roasting sect believes it is never justified for a company to buy its own shares, as Rio Tinto plans to. A more tolerant persuasion smiles on the practice when the stock is cheap.

Lord Wolfson, chief executive of Next, is a self-appointed arbiter of whether buybacks are justified. For him, profits to market capitalisation is the key ratio. He argues that a company can buy back shares if this raises earnings per share more efficiently than investing, for example in new shops.

The miner will spend \$2bn on this year's buyback, lifting EPS about 2.5 per cent. A \$2bn investment in iron ore pits would need to return more than 15 per cent to have the same effect, according to Lord W's formula. Such

paybacks are scarce at this time of depressed commodity prices.

Rio's Sam Walsh thus receives the clothing tycoon's theoretical blessing. The group is not borrowing heavily to bolster its shares. Indeed, the stock repurchase is only half top-end estimates. Mr Walsh may be conserving his ammo in case would-be bidder Glencore renews its overtures.

Lord W's formula does not, however, address an agency problem: executives whose bonuses depend on EPS growth may unduly favour buybacks. The solution would be for the board to adjust their payouts for shares in issue.

Fink blinks

Lord Fink has dropped a threat to sue Ed Miliband, even as Labour has softened its rhetoric against tax avoidance. The Tory grandee said he had taken "vanilla" measures to avoid tax, lodging shares in Swiss trusts. This begs a question: what would raspberry-ripple tax avoidance with chopped nuts and sprinkles look like?

jonathan.guthrie@ft.com

City Insider

Edited by
Harriet Agnew
harriet.agnew@ft.com

Lord Green No room at the HQ

The designers of the private dining rooms at HSBC's Canary Wharf HQ had a sixth sense that seems to have eluded many of the group's bankers. Each "PDR" is named after a former chairman. So the Willie Purves room — dedicated to the bank's chairman for much of the 1990s — is solid and understated. Just like the legacy of Purves, a pin-up for current boss Stuart Gulliver. The John Bond suite is less impressive — a hotchpotch of three



adjacent rooms that can be interlinked to look like one big one. That's a neat echo of the multiple acquisitions he tacked on to HSBC 10 to 15 years ago, including the Swiss private bank that has caused such ructions this week. The more hands-off management style of Lord Green (pictured) is also reflected — there is no Green room at all. Of course it's all rather academic at the moment. The latest scandal has taken the edge off everyone's appetite.

AHL's rock star Top of the charts

Stanley Fink, the former Conservative treasurer and so-called godfather of the UK hedge fund industry, admitted this week to "vanilla" tax avoidance. Fink hedge fund Man Group from 2000 to 2007, during the heyday of its quant fund AHL. After a couple of tricky years, AHL Diversified has soared back towards the top of the performance charts recently, gaining 34 per cent in 2014 and another 7 per cent in January. Its original founders are long gone. The "H" (David Harding) and "I" (Martin Lueck) in AHL stayed in the hedge fund industry, setting up rivals Winton Capital Management and Aspect Capital. Not so the lesser known Michael Adam, the "A" in AHL, who was blinded in one eye at the age of four. The computer programmer turned rock star now goes by the name Mike Marlin. He is just finishing his fourth album — and will be hoping to top another kind of charts. Rock on.

Boris Johnson Fashion victim

The British fashion industry has an unlikely ambassador in the form of Boris Johnson. The bumbling Mayor of London — not known for his sartorial prowess — embarked this week on a six-day tour Stateside. In a New York on Tuesday night, Johnson avoided his beloved saggy-bottomed tracksuit and tight-fitting "London is Great" T-shirt, and donned a suit and tie to meet American Vogue editor Anna Wintour. They were guests at a dinner hosted by Barclays to celebrate British and American fashion. Johnson's US jaunt meant that he missed the glitzy Tory party fundraiser, the Black and White Ball, on Monday night. Here one of the auction lots was a "wardrobe rescue day" with fashion industry expert Bumble Hadden-Paton, "who will spend a day going through your wardrobe and finding ways of restyling and revamping existing outfits". It's not clear whether Boris sent an aide to bid on his behalf.

Mind Mylk Banker brain boost

Calling all frazzled bankers and traders. Dr Tara Swart, a neuroscientist and leadership coach, has developed a "brain food juice" to kick-start your day. Mind Mylk, which has been developed with Imbiber London, is a concoction of matcha (green tea), cucumber, cashew, chia seeds, coconut oil, dates and water. The melange forms the key ingredients for concentration, alertness and productivity. It may just hold the secret to eternal work.

Food & drug retailers

Ocado chiefs' bonuses slashed by up to 40%

Missed sales and earnings targets see payments cut despite group's first profit

KADHM SHUBBER

Ocado executives had their bonuses cut by as much as 40 per cent last year, despite steering the online grocery delivery company to its first pre-tax profit in 15 years of trading.

Performance-related cash payouts for the grocer's current executive directors fell 34 per cent to £912,000 for the 12 months to November 30, the company's annual report has revealed.

Payments were down on the previous year because internal targets for gross

£7.2m
Online grocer's first full-year profit in its 15 years of trading

27%
Reduction in cash bonus for Tim Steiner, chief executive

sales and earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation were missed.

But this month — and after about £500m of investment since launch — the company reported its first full-year pre-tax profit of £7.2m since it was founded in 2000 by three former Goldman Sachs bankers, including Tim Steiner, the chief executive.

Mr Steiner, whose cash bonus fell 27 per cent to £385,000 last year, played down the significance of the move into the black, saying last week that pre-tax profit was not a key target. He told the Financial Times: "If it was our goal... we would have done it before."

Nevertheless, Ocado directors gained access to shares worth £16.9m — among

them an allocation to co-founder Jason Gissing, who left the company in May. These holdings were part of an incentive scheme linked to the share price, which was set up before the company floated on the London Stock Exchange in 2010.

Ocado delivers groceries to more than 450,000 customers in the UK and runs online sales for the supermarket Wm Morrison under a £200m, 25-year deal agreed in 2013. Ocado also has a product-sourcing agreement with Waitrose, its first supermarket partner, although Waitrose can give notice to terminate the deal this year.

For the full year, Ocado's ebitda rose 56 per cent to £71.6m on sales excluding value added tax and voucher payments, which was above the minimum thresh-

old for bonus payments but short of the company's internal targets.

Ocado's group sales of £1.02bn were similarly above a minimum threshold but lower than the full target.

In addition, the company set individual objectives for each director, which were not met in full. "Achievement against the objectives was between 54 per cent and 56 per cent," according to the company's annual report.

Mr Steiner's overall cash pay fell only 3.6 per cent to £944,000, as a 22 per cent increase in his basic salary offset the bonus cut.

Neill Abrams, the company's legal and business affairs director, took the biggest hit to his bonus: it fell 40 per cent to £156,000.



Ocado has 450,000 UK customers



Seeing red: the property portal has been hit harder than Rightmove by the launch of OntheMarket — Chris Batson/TFT

Full house Zoopla rocked by arrival of OntheMarket

Property portal Zoopla has reported an 11 per cent fall in the number of estate agents advertising on its website over the past year, partly due to competition from recently launched rival website OntheMarket. At the end of January, 16,967 estate agency branches advertised on Zoopla, down from 18,999 at the same point last year, the company said in a trading update.

OntheMarket makes it a condition that agents on its site may advertise on only one other site — in effect forcing agents to leave one of the two others: Zoopla, or market leader Rightmove.

Since OntheMarket launched on January 26, analysts estimated that

about 80 per cent of the 4,600 agents to have joined it chose to leave Zoopla. Zoopla admitted that OntheMarket's launch had hurt "in the short term", and said it expected "some limited further churn" of estate agent clients.

But in January, traffic to Zoopla was up 14 per cent, year on year, to a record 50.5m visits. Bullish Zoopla founder Alex Chesterman said: "We believe that [OntheMarket] remains a short-term event and that its success will be determined by whether consumers engage with it."

Kate Allen
See Lombard

BNP PARIBAS INVESTMENT PARTNERS
Short-named BNPP L1
Luxembourg SICAV - UCITS class
Registered office: 33, rue de Gasperi, L-5826 Hesperange
Luxembourg Trade and Company Register No. B 32327

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS

The following changes will be incorporated in the next version of the prospectus dated March 2015 and will be effective on 16 March 2015.

A. Changes applicable to all sub-funds

Bearer Shares

Pursuant to the Luxembourg Law of 28 July 2014 regarding immobilisation of bearer shares and units, holders of bearer shares are required to deposit them with BNP Paribas Securities Services, Luxembourg branch, as the Depositary appointed for this purpose. Specifically, we ask that the holders concerned deposit their bearer shares no later than 18 February 2016.

- Either, from this moment, in a securities account with their usual banking organisation, ensuring that the bank will register itself as a nominee (in its own name or on behalf of the shareholder) with BNP Paribas Securities Services, Luxembourg branch;

- Or, from 18 February 2015, to BNP Paribas Securities Services, Luxembourg branch by notifying BGL BNP Paribas, Kirchberg office, 10 Rue Edward Steichen, L-2549 Luxembourg. To do so, please call the following number to arrange an appointment: (+352) 42 42 3175; uniquely in such cases and upon written request of the shareholder to the bearer for a certificate stating that all the registrations pertaining to them is issued.

Please keep in mind that, in accordance with the statutory provisions:

- the rights to receive dividends to which shares have been entitled as at 18 February 2015 will automatically be suspended and the holders of these shares will not be entitled to attend General Meetings, nor included when calculating the quorum or voting majority, until such time as the shares are immobilised;

- the distribution of dividends attached to bearer shares that have not been immobilised as at 18 February 2015 will be deferred until such date as the shares are immobilised, provided that the distribution rights have not expired, and with no requirement for interest to be paid.

Bearer shares that have not been immobilised as at 18 February 2016 will be cancelled. The funds corresponding to these shares will be deposited with the Luxembourg Caisse de consignation (consignment office) until such time as reimbursement of the funds is requested by a person who can prove their ownership of the shares.

B. Changes applicable to the Equity sub-funds

"Equity Euro"

For the main part of the investment policy (at least 75%), issuers of the underlying main assets are subject to corporate or equivalent tax and registered in member states of the European Economic Area, except for countries that do not cooperate in the fight against fraud and tax evasion.

"Equity World Quality Focus"

As of 30 March 2015 (NAV date), the sub-fund will be converted into a Feeder sub-fund of the "PARVEST Equity World" (this sub-fund is not registered in the United Kingdom) to be renamed "PARVEST Equity Best Selection World" with the following new features:

- As Feeder, it will invest at least 85% of its assets in the Master. The investment policy of the Master is the same as the current investment policy of the Sub-fund with the following difference: Main investments of the Master represent 75% of its assets instead 2/3 in the current investment policy of the Feeder.

The remaining portion, namely a maximum of 15% of its assets, may be invested in: a) ancillary liquid assets; b) financial derivative instrument, which may be used only for hedging purposes. In accordance with the Appendix 1, point 1.g) and Appendix 2 of Book I of the Prospectus.

The Feeder will not support subscription or redemption fees.

- The maximum "Other fees" into the Feeder will decrease:

a) from 0.40% to 0.09% in the "Classic" and "Privilege" categories;

b) from 0.35% to 0.05% in the "I" category;

Media

WPP to buy \$300m stake in ComScore

Global marketing group agrees deal to bolster its data operations

ROBERT COOKSON — DIGITAL MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

WPP has agreed to buy a stake worth about \$300m in ComScore, as the world's largest advertising group forges an alliance with the US-based internet audience measurement company.

Under a complex deal, WPP will end up owning between 15 and 19.9 per cent of ComScore, which is listed on Nasdaq and has a stock market capitalisation of about \$1.5bn.

Kantar, WPP's wholly owned data investment management arm, has also entered into a partnership with ComScore in which the two groups will work

together to provide ways for advertisers to measure how campaigns are performing across online and offline media.

This partnership aims to build a rival to Nielsen, the market leader in cross-platform media measurement.

Kantar, which specialises in traditional media such as television, will partner with ComScore, which specialises in online measurement, across dozens of markets outside the US only.

Serge Matta, ComScore chief executive, said: "We can strengthen our position by combining our expertise."

The ultimate goal is to track how consumers respond to advertising whether they are using a smartphone or a TV, and following them between devices. There is a "massive global opportunity waiting to be unlocked by cracking the code on cross-media audience and campaign measurement", Mr Matta said.

WPP, by far the most acquisitive company in the marketing services sector, has focused on expanding its data and digital businesses

WPP will purchase up to 15.45 per cent of ComScore through a tender offer at a price of \$46.13 per share. Meanwhile, ComScore will issue new shares representing 4.45 per cent of the company in exchange for some of Kantar's European internet audience measurement assets.

Depending on the result of the tender offer, ComScore could issue an even greater number of new shares to guarantee that WPP will own at least 15 per cent of the company. The companies said the transaction was subject to regulatory approvals and was expected to be completed later this year.

WPP, by far the most acquisitive company in the marketing services sector, has focused on expanding its data and digital businesses such as Kantar and Xaxis, its advertising trading desk.

Last year WPP acquired a 16.7 per

cent stake in Rentrak, the US-based film and TV measurement company.

WPP's data investment management companies collectively generate revenues of about \$5bn.

► Informa has written down the value of Datamonitor by almost 40 per cent, just eight years after the business media group acquired the market intelligence company for £500m.

The FTSE 250 company said yesterday it had taken a non-cash impairment charge of £190m on the balance sheet value of the Datamonitor assets it acquired in 2007. Colin Morrison, an expert on the UK media who has managed businesses at RBI, NatMags, Future and Emap, said that in 2007, "industry insiders gasped" at the £500m purchase price, which was a multiple of more than seven times Data-monitor's revenue.



Serge Matta:
'Cracking the
code on cross-
media audience'

Travel & leisure. Aer Lingus bid

Irish MPs grill Walsh over Heathrow landing slots

IAG chief guarantees London flights for five years if €1.35bn approach were to go through

VINCENT BOLAND — DUBLIN

JANE WILD — LONDON

A commitment by International Airlines Group to allow Aer Lingus to use its take off and landing slots at London's Heathrow airport for flights to Ireland cannot be extended beyond five years, Willie Walsh, IAG's chief executive, said yesterday.

During a two-and-a-half hour grilling by Irish MPs about IAG's €1.35bn bid for Aer Lingus, Mr Walsh said he was ready to offer "a legal cast iron guarantee wrapped in concrete" that the Dublin-based carrier's 23 pairs of slots at Heathrow would be used for Irish flights for five years.

But he said he was not prepared to extend the timeframe to allay political concerns in Ireland that could yet see the Irish government refuse to back IAG's offer to buy Aer Lingus.

Mr Walsh said IAG was seeking an irrevocable commitment from the government to back its offer for the takeover to succeed. But, he added: "Don't believe that because I make a proposal that I am ready to improve it. I can tell you for definite that I am not prepared to increase it."

In a two-day blitz of meetings in Ireland with politicians, officials and the media, Mr Walsh has been seeking to ease concerns about continued access to Heathrow in the event of IAG buying Aer Lingus.

Enda Kenny, Ireland's prime minister, said last weekend he wanted "cast iron guarantees" on the future of the Irish flag carrier's slots at Heathrow if the government was to support a takeover.

The IAG bid for Aer Lingus, in which the Irish state has a 25 per cent stake, has generated fierce controversy over whether the carrier would continue to fly



Willie Walsh,
IAG's chief
executive, right,
arrives at the
parliamentary
hearing in
Dublin
yesterday

— Aidan Crawley/Bloomberg

into London from Cork and Shannon. These two politically sensitive airports rely on Aer Lingus for a large slice of their business.

After Mr Walsh's appearance before MPs, IAG said it was offering to enhance protections already submitted to the Irish government by making a commitment that some of Aer Lingus' Heathrow slots would continue to support flights on routes to Cork and Shannon for five years.

Mr Walsh said Ireland "has nothing to fear" from a takeover of Aer Lingus, adding that IAG's offer for the airline was "all about growth".

He was speaking after

Ryanair vowed to appeal to the UK's highest court after being ordered to sell down its 30 per cent stake in Aer Lingus because of competition concerns.

The UK's court of appeal refused Ryanair leave to appeal, but Europe's largest low cost airline by revenue said it would continue its fight in Britain's supreme court.

Ryanair said it would also ask the UK competition and markets authority to review its report that ordered the sale of its Aer Lingus stake. Ryanair argued the IAG bid for Aer Lingus disproved the claim the budget airline's stake would prevent other carriers from merging with or bidding for the Irish flag carrier.

Mr Walsh said IAG would bring "fantastic value" to Aer Lingus because of its

'Don't believe that because I make a proposal that I am ready to improve it. I can tell you for definite that I am not prepared to increase it'

Willie Walsh
IAG chief

holding group structure, and that the Irish carrier's brand and headquarters in Dublin would be maintained.

"It's about growing the Aer Lingus network and with the growth of the network comes growth in jobs," he said.

Meanwhile, Pádraig O'Riordán, chairman of the Dublin Airport Authority, said that a sale of Aer Lingus to IAG could "contribute significantly" to growth at Ireland's biggest airport, especially in transatlantic traffic.

He said: "It appears there may be some potential positives for Dublin airport should the takeover proceed."

His comments echo those of tourism chiefs, who argued that Aer Lingus as part of IAG would be able to expand its network into the US.

Aerospace & defence

Former HSBC banker Dorner joins Rolls-Royce

PEGGY HOLLINGER — INDUSTRY EDITOR

Rolls-Royce has tapped a former HSBC banker to join its board as a non-executive director to help the aero-engine maker restore relations with investors and regulators after a dire 2014 marked by profit warnings.

Irene Dorner, named in 2012 by American Banker magazine as the most powerful woman in banking, will join the board to replace John Neill, the chairman of Unipart, who has been a non-executive since 2008.

Ms Dorner's appointment will be announced with Rolls-Royce's annual results today. The group is expected to report a 9 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £1.6bn, after one-off charges, while analysts expect the sharp fall in oil prices to force a review of expectations for 2015.

The UK-born banker's nomination to the board of one of Britain's leading blue-chip groups comes as her former employer faces an international storm over allegations that HSBC's Swiss operations colluded with clients to conceal evidence of their bank accounts from the relevant tax authorities.

However, as a former head of HSBC's US and Malaysian operations, Ms Dorner has never been involved with the Swiss division, people close to the situation said. She retired from the bank in November after 32 years.

Ms Dorner came to public attention in 2012 when she apologised to a US Senate committee investigating money laundering claims for the bank's "unacceptable" history of compliance. HSBC was fined \$1.9bn later that year for violating sanctions and money laundering rules. She had been appointed head of the bank's US business in 2011, after the alleged sanction violations.

Such a conciliatory approach could be useful to Rolls-Royce as it attempts to recover from a difficult 2014. Britain's most admired engineering group fell from grace last year after a series of botched communications and missteps.

As well as issuing several profit warnings, Rolls-Royce was reprimanded by the Financial Reporting Council for using aggressive accounting practices and is under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office for alleged corruption relating to deals in China and Indonesia.

The engine maker will today attempt to restore credibility by giving more information on investment plans and returns in its civil aerospace business over the next few years as it enters a phase of accelerated production of new generation engines.

With returns made on long-term maintenance and service contracts, rather than the sale of the engines, profits take longer to materialise and margins will come under pressure this year.

Given this constraint, analysts want a clearer explanation of how Rolls-Royce intends to meet its target of increasing margins from this year's forecast 12 per cent to 14.5-15.5 per cent by 2018 in the civil business.

UBS is forecasting margins of 12.5 per cent for 2018.

Food & drug retailers

Morrison chief leaves early

CLAER BARRETT

Dalton Philips, the embattled chief executive of Wm Morrison, is to leave the supermarket group with immediate effect rather than working out his notice period, the company announced yesterday.

Mr Philips will officially step down from the board and leave the business on Monday even though a replacement has yet to be found. He was ousted as chief executive a month ago following several

Andrew Higginson, Morrison's chairman: 'We're making good progress with the search for a CEO'



years of poor performance for the grocer, but had agreed to stay in post until the retailer's full-year results in March.

Andrew Higginson, the ex-Tesco director who was parachuted in as Morrison's chairman as Mr Philips' departure was announced, would "spend more time in the business until the new chief executive is in place", the group said. Trevor Strain, Morrison's chief financial officer who previously worked with Mr Higginson at Tesco, will assume Mr Philips' executive responsibilities in the interim. However, he has already

ruled himself out of the running for the chief executive's job.

"We're making good progress with the search for a new CEO," said Mr Higginson. "With Trevor Strain chairing the management board, together with the retailing strength and depth that I've seen in my short time at Morrison, I'm confident that it will be business as usual during this transitional period."

The news comes a day after Mr Higginson symbolically scrapped the "missing machines" that Mr Philips had installed in the fresh-produce aisles of more than 300 Morrison supermarkets in an effort to appeal to more upmarket shoppers. The machines had come to symbolise the conflict between Mr Philips' pursuit of a modernising agenda as sales slumped, and the more traditional members of its management board, which analysts referred to as the "war of fog".

At the retailer's annual meeting last year, its long-time chief Sir Ken Morrison accused Mr Philips of having more "bullshit" than his herd of cattle. The company said that scrapping the machines was about "going back to basics".

Shares in Morrison climbed 2 per cent to 183p. During Mr Philips' five-year tenure, Morrison shares almost halved in value. On the day his departure was announced to the stock market, they rose by 6 per cent.

UBS FUND MANAGEMENT (LUXEMBOURG) S.A.

Registered office: 33A, avenue J.F. Kennedy, L-1855 Luxembourg

Registre de Commerce et des Sociétés: Luxembourg B 154,210 | (the «Management Company»)

NOTICE TO UNITHOLDERS OF UBS (LUX) MONEY MARKET FUND (THE «FUND»)

The Board of Directors of the Management Company wishes to inform you of the following changes in the February 2015 version of the Fund's sales prospectus:

- 1) The «Collateral management» section contains information regarding the decision taken by the Management Company to make use of the exemption clause described therein and accept collateralisation worth up to 50% of the net assets of the respective Subfund in government bonds which are issued or guaranteed by the following countries: USA, Japan, UK, Germany and Switzerland.
- 2) The cut-off time shall be changed from 16:00 (CET) to 15:00 (CET). From 1 July 2015, subscription, redemption applications («orders») registered with the Administrative Agent no later than 15:00 CET (cut-off time) on a business day («order date») will be processed on the following business day (valuation date) on the basis of the net asset value calculated for that day.
- 3) In the section «Redemption of units», it shall be clarified that the countervalue for redeemed Subfund units is paid at the latest on the third business day after the order date (value date) unless legal provisions, such as foreign exchange controls or restrictions on capital movements, or other circumstances beyond the control of the Custodian Bank, make it impossible to transfer the redemption amount to the country in which the redemption order was submitted. By including «at the latest», the methodology for the redemption of units shall be brought in line with the methodology already used for issuing units. This change will enter into force on the day this notice is published.
- 4) The Fund's fee structure, as described in the section «Expenses paid by the Fund» of the sales prospectus, shall be amended as follows, with effect from 1 April 2015:
 - a) all additional expenses related to management of the Fund's assets for the sale and purchase of assets (bid/offer spread, brokerage fees in line with the market, commissions, fees, etc); these expenses are generally calculated upon the purchase or sale of the respective assets. In derogation hereof, these additional expenses, which arise through the sale and purchase of assets in connection with the settlement of the issue and redemption of units, are covered by the application of the single swing pricing principle pursuant to the section «Net asset value, issue, redemption and conversion price»;
 - b) fees of the supervisory authority for the establishment, modification, liquidation and merger of the Fund, as well as fees of the supervisory authorities and any stock exchanges on which the Subfunds are listed;
 - c) auditor's fees for the annual audit and certification in connection with the establishment, modification, liquidation and merger of the Fund, as well as any other fees paid to the auditor for the services it provides in relation to the administration of the Fund and as permissible by law;
 - d) fees for legal and tax advisers, as well as notaries, in connection with the establishment, registration in distribution countries, modification, liquidation and merger of the Fund, as well as for the general safeguarding of the interests of the Fund and its investors, insofar as this is not expressly prohibited by law;
 - e) costs for the publication of the Fund's net asset value and all costs for notices to investors, including translation costs;
 - f) costs for the preparation of the Fund's annual and semi-annual reports, as well as all other documents legally required in the countries of domiciliation and distribution;
 - g) costs for the Fund's registration with any foreign supervisory authorities, if applicable, including fees, translation costs and fees for the foreign representative or paying agent;
 - h) expenses incurred through use of voting or creditors' rights by the Fund, including fees for external advisers;
 - i) costs and fees related to any intellectual property registered in Fund's name or usurpation rights of the Fund;
 - j) all expenses arising in connection with any extraordinary measures taken by the Management Company, Portfolio Manager or Custodian Bank for protecting the interests of the investors;
 - k) if the Management Company participates in class-action suits in the interests of investors, it may charge the Fund's assets for the expenses arising in connection with third parties (e.g. legal and Custodian Bank costs). Furthermore, the Management Company may charge for all administrative costs, provided these are verifiable and disclosed, and taken into account in the disclosure of the Fund's total expense ratio (TER).
- 5) The Management Company may pay retrocessions in order to cover the distribution activities of the Fund.

The aforementioned changes shall enter into force on 13 February 2015, unless expressly stated otherwise therein. Unitholders who do not agree with the changes described in sections (2) and (4) above may redeem their units free of charge until the respective date of entry into force. These changes can be found in the February 2015 version of the Fund's sales prospectus, as well as in the Fund's Management Regulations (where applicable).

Luxembourg, 13 February 2015 | The Management Company

UBS FUND MANAGEMENT (LUXEMBOURG) S.A.

Registered office: 33A, avenue J.F. Kennedy, L-1855 Luxembourg

Registre de Commerce et des Sociétés: Luxembourg B 154,210 | (the «Management Company»)

NOTICE TO UNITHOLDERS OF UBS (LUX) MONEY MARKET INVEST (THE «FUND»)

The Board of Directors of the Management Company wishes to inform you of the following changes in the February 2015 version of the Fund's sales prospectus:

- 1) The section entitled «Collateral management» contains information regarding the decision taken by the Management Company to make use of the exemption clause described therein and accept collateralisation worth up to 50% of the net assets of the respective Subfund in government bonds which are issued or guaranteed by the following countries: USA, Japan, UK, Germany and Switzerland.
- 2) In the section entitled «Net asset value, issue, redemption and conversion price», it shall be clarified that the same valuation methods are used for the valuation of money market instruments in non-money market funds as for money market instruments in money market funds (mark-to-market). In the interests of unitholders, the valuation methods were harmonised on 1 December 2014.
- 3) The cut-off time shall be changed from 16:00 (CET) to 15:00 (CET). From 1 July 2015, subscription and redemption applications («orders») registered with the Administrative Agent no later than 15:00 CET (cut-off time) on a business day («order date») will be processed on the following business day (valuation date) on the basis of the net asset value calculated for that day.
- 4) The

MARKET DATA

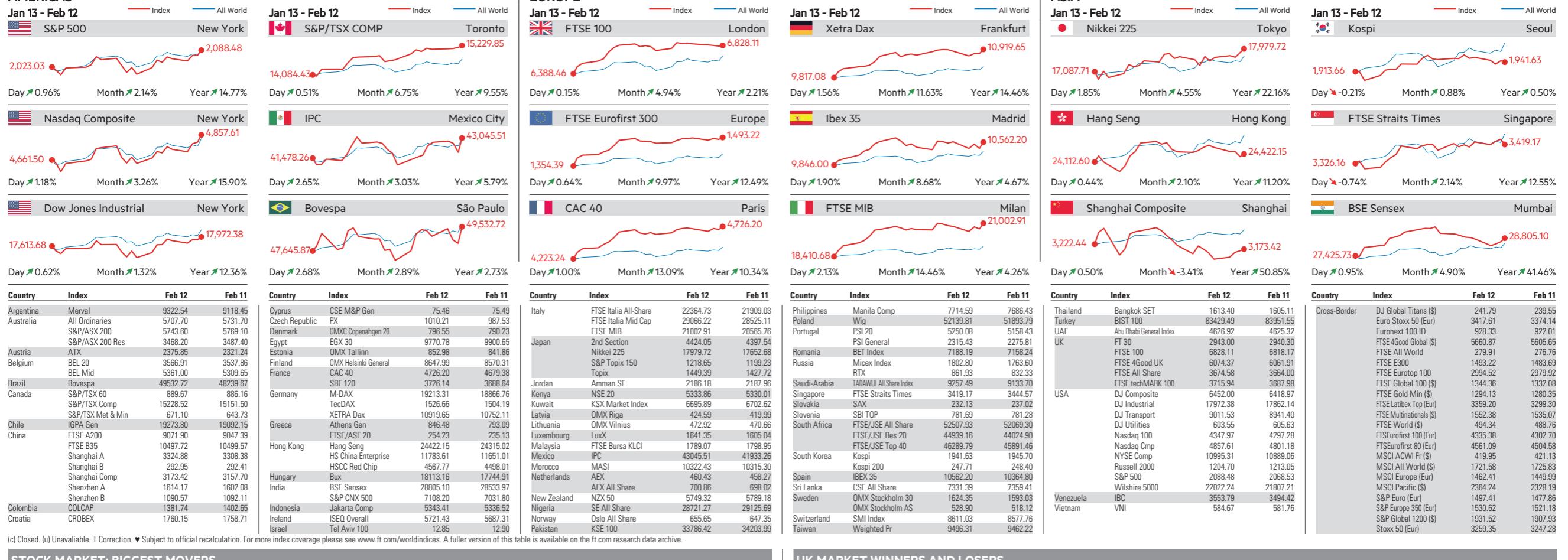
WORLD MARKETS AT A GLANCE

FT.COM/MARKETS DATA

Change during previous day's trading (%)



Stock Market movements over last 30 days, with the FTSE All-World in the same currency as a comparison



(c) Closed. (u) Unavailable. ↑ Correction. ♦ Subject to official recalculation. For more index coverage please see www.ft.com/worldindices. A fuller version of this table is available on the ft.com research data archive.

STOCK MARKET: BIGGEST MOVERS

AMERICA		LONDON		EURO MARKETS		TOKYO		FTSE 100		FTSE 250		FTSE SmallCap		Industry Sectors	
ACTIVE STOCKS	stock traded'm	close price	Day's change	ACTIVE STOCKS	stock traded'm	close price	Day's change	ACTIVE STOCKS	stock traded'm	close price	Day's change	ACTIVE STOCKS	stock traded'm	close price	Day's change
Apple	91.5	126.46	-1.50	158 Bp	224.2	443.40	-1.50	Intesa Sanpaolo	691.8	2.73	0.13	Toyota Motor	109.1	785.00	+1.38%
Cisco Systems	34.5	29.45	-2.53	Bt	199.0	450.00	-10.00	Unicredit	604.2	5.33	0.03	Mitsubishi Ufj Fin.	895.6	702.00	-18.70
Tesla Motors	30.7	202.88	-9.92	Ch	191.4	182.00	-36.00	Novartis N	555.5	89.49	0.00	Softbank	759.0	704.00	-55.00
Baidu	29.1	205.70	-6.02	Rio Tinto	188.2	303.50	-6.98	Zurich Insurance N	509.3	296.32	0.00	Sony	670.6	323.50	-158.00
American Express	26.6	106.71	-1.36	Shire	174.3	459.70	-22.00	Inpresa	492.4	12.00	0.38	Fanvic	666.3	22045.00	+1290%
Johnson & Johnson	25.4	88.44	-1.44	Vodafone	144.0	213.30	-4.20	Amadeus It	461.6	35.99	0.00	NTT Com	451.2	424.90	-63.00
Bank of America	19.4	16.67	-0.31	Hebe Holdings	142.1	566.40	-4.20	NTT Com	436.6	8.24	0.21	Nippon Telegraph And Telephone	393.5	752.00	+562%
Albertsons Inc	18.4	35.10	-0.04	Bt	134.6	1495.40	+21.00	NEC	419.2	12.00	0.38	NTT Com	419.3	419.30	+0.00
Pfizer	15.0	34.87	-0.62	Lloyd Banking	127.5	74.43	-0.04	Roche G	416.7	47.35	0.40	Japan Tobacco	358.8	358.00	-50.00
BIGGEST MOVERS	114.77	7.77	7.26	Keller	956.0	49.50	-4.50	Pearceau K	56.9	11.69	0.77	Fuji Heavy Industries	341.7	409.00	+53.00
Ups				Ups				Takashimaya	1114.00	60.00	0.60	Swisscom	456.3	456.30	+0.00
Netapp	82.40	11.30	-2.29	Ventana Resources	473.00	41.70	-9.67	National Bank (cr)	1.18	18.00	0.18	Marou Co.	133.70	186.00	+16.00
Expedia New	89.57	11.35	-5.67	Coca-Cola Hbc Ag	1159.00	68.00	-6.23	Alpha Bank (cr)	0.35	0.05	14.75	20245.00	1290.00	6.22	
Cisco Systems	29.46	2.55	-9.39	Allied Minds	482.30	26.80	-5.88	Renault	77.20	7.20	0.00	Sony	37.70	33.00	-5.70
Equifax corporat	92.74	7.73	-8.51	Hunting	503.00	26.10	-5.47	Pearceau K	0.64	0.06	9.97	Takashimaya	1114.00	60.00	-56.00
Int Flavors	114.77	7.77	7.26	Keller	956.00	49.50	-4.50	RTX	114.00	12.00	0.10	Swisscom	456.30	456.30	+0.00
Downs				Downs				Shawoya	1087.00	-4.40	-4.09	Shell Sekiyu K.K.	1087.00	-72.00	-6.21
Netapp	36.90	-2.90	-7.28	Afran	7.11	-1.84	-20.56	Pernod Ricard	103.20	-4.40	-4.09	Showa Shell Sekiyu K.K.	1087.00	-72.00	-6.21
Tesoro	81.42	-5.67	-6.72	As World	304.60	-19.30	-5.95	Edif	23.40	-0.94	-3.84	Chiyoida	95.70	-51.00	-50.00
American Express	80.48	-5.53	-6.43	Nostrum Oil & Gas	509.00	-16.00	-3.05	Royal Dutch Shell	28.55	-0.42	-1.43	Amada Co.	1046.00	-54.40	-51.00
Agl Resources	49.80	-3.01	-5.70	Game Delight	263.00	-6.10	-2.27	Reed Elsevier	22.31	-0.22	-0.95	Jgc	2406.00	-4.86	-4.86
Stets Motors	20.68	-8.92	-4.66	Jimmy Choo	162.70	-3.70	-2.20	Danone	58.14	-0.53	-0.90	Fujikura	475.00	-21.00	-24.00
BIGGEST MOVERS	114.77	7.77	7.26	Keller	956.00	49.50	-4.50	Globe	116.00	-1.61	-47.16	Swisscom	456.30	456.30	+0.00
Ups				Ups				Shawoya	1087.00	-4.40	-4.09	Shell Sekiyu K.K.	1087.00	-72.00	-6.21
Expedia New	89.57	11.35	-5.67	Coca-Cola Hbc Ag	1159.00	68.00	-6.23	Alpha Bank (cr)	0.35	0.05	14.75	20245.00	1290.00	6.22	
Cisco Systems	29.46	2.55	-9.39	Allied Minds	482.30	26.80	-5.88	Renault	77.20	7.20	0.00	Sony	37.70	33.00	-5.70
Equifax corporat	92.74	7.73	-8.51	Hunting	503.00	26.10	-5.47	Pearceau K	0.64	0.06	9.97	Takashimaya	1114.00	60.00	-56.00
Int Flavors	114.77	7.77	7.26	Keller	956.00	49.50	-4.50	RTX	114.00	12.00	0.10	Swisscom	456.30	456.30	+0.00
Downs				Downs				Shawoya	1087.00	-4.40	-4.09	Shell Sekiyu K.K.	1087.00	-72.00	-6.21
Netapp	36.90	-2.90	-7.28	Afran	7.11	-1.84	-20.56	Pernod Ricard	103.20	-4.40	-4.09	Showa Shell Sekiyu K.K.	1087.00	-72.00	-6.21
Tesoro	81.42	-5.67	-6.72	As World	304.60	-19.30	-5.95	Edif	23.40	-0.94	-3.84	Chiyoida	95.70	-51.00	-50.00
American Express	80.48	-5.53	-6.43	Nostrum Oil & Gas	509.00	-16.00	-3.05	Royal Dutch Shell	28.55	-0.42	-1.43	Amada Co.	1046.00	-54.40	-51.00
Agl Resources	49.80	-3.01	-5.70	Game Delight	263.00	-6.10	-2.27	Reed Elsevier	22.31	-0.22	-0.95	Jgc	2406.00	-4.86	-4.86
Stets Motors	20.68	-8.92	-4.66	Jimmy Choo	162.70	-3.70	-2.20	Danone	58.14	-0.53	-0.90	Fujikura	475.00	-21.00	-24.00
BIGGEST MOVERS	114.77	7.77	7.26	Keller	956.00	49.50	-4.50	Globe	116.00	-1.61	-47.16	Swisscom	456.30	456.30	+0.00
Ups				Ups				Shawoya	1087.00	-4.40	-4.09	Shell Sekiyu K.K.	1087.00	-72.00	-6.21
Expedia New	89.57	11.35	-5.67	Coca-Cola Hbc Ag	1159.00	68.00	-6.23	Alpha Bank (cr)	0.35	0.05	14.75	20245.00	1290.00	6.22	
Cisco Systems	29.46	2.55	-9.39	Allied Minds	482.30	26.80	-5.88	Renault	77.20	7.20	0.00	Sony	37.70	33.00	-5.70
Equifax corporat	92.74	7.73	-8.51	Hunting	503.00	26.10	-5.47	Pearceau K	0.64	0.06	9.97	Takashimaya	1114.00	60.00	-56.00
Int Flavors	114.77	7.77	7.26	Keller	956.00	49.50	-4.50	Globe	116.00	-1.61	-47.16	Swisscom	456.30	456.30	+0.00
Downs				Downs				Shawoya	1087.00	-4.40	-4.09	Shell Sekiyu K.K.	1087.00	-72.00	-6.21
Netapp	36.90	-2.90	-7.28	Afran	7.11	-1.84	-20.56	Pernod Ricard	103.20						

MARKET DATA

FT500: THE WORLD'S LARGEST COMPANIES

Stock	52 Week					Stock	52 Week					Stock	52 Week					Stock	52 Week					Stock	52 Week							
	Price	Day Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	McCap.m	Price	Day Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	McCap.m	Price	Day Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	McCap.m	Price	Day Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	McCap.m				
Australia (ASX)	34.99 -0.11	39.27	50.47	52.56	12.68	74501.1	ChristianDior	167.30	2.15	167.85	126.10	1.51	18.38	34575.9	FastRetail	44305	870.00	46325	30950	0.80	45.28	39495.7	BNY Mellon	52.25	0.80	54.15	43.98	6.38	149.79	26754.51		
BHPBttn	50.76 -0.27	39.75	62.50	4.38	76.00	76541.1	Cred Agr	111.34	-0.56	93.00	9.75	3.25	12.95	33013.35	Fuji Hwy Ind	134.00	-0.15	146.00	4617.00	2.93	11.12	15.25	26935.00	Lyondell	69.80	2.62	115.40	70.06	2.74	11.14	44959.98	
CmvBkuAu	91.18 -0.68	93.95	73.57	4.60	16.15	14023.16	EDF	23.41	-0.94	29.90	20.90	5.78	1.38	49508.7	HondaMr	3899.5	45.80	3160	930.00	1.12	15.15	26925.55	BankRock	374.00	4.95	375.00	375.00	1.00	10.25	11959.00		
CSL	95.54 -0.59	99.94	17.71	1.51	16.26	31288.91	Eccler Intl	96.20	-1.05	102.50	70.51	1.06	16.20	23283.03	JapanTob	3851.5	78.00	4193	2997	2.87	15.44	60188.24	Beine	145.00	0.17	145.00	145.00	0.00	12.25	10377.07		
NatUsBk	36.71 -0.35	37.44	31.33	5.74	15.64	68056.96	EdF	18.80	-0.03	21.19	16.17	8.63	4.87	52027.37	KodI	7684	80.00	8449	5000	2.15	16.22	57923.09	M&P	145.00	0.17	145.00	145.00	0.00	12.25	10377.07		
Telstra	6.45 -0.04	6.74	4.96	4.85	16.32	60825.08	Escal Int'l	96.20	-1.05	102.50	70.51	1.06	16.20	23283.03	GDF Suez	18.80	-0.03	21.19	16.17	8.63	4.87	52027.37	Novartis	94.60	0.10	99.75	70.85	2.67	15.19	75719.19		
Westfarmers	43.83 -0.07	46.69	20.46	4.82	28.02	3792.08	Kering	182.70	-0.35	184.20	136.95	2.22	15.60	26227.56	MitsubSft	21.50	2.90	230	215.5	0.38	46.76	30001.21	Broadspectrum	45.46	0.94	45.46	45.46	0.00	12.25	10377.07		
WoodstPet	36.69 -0.14	37.20	31.33	5.22	14.61	88035.5	L'oreal	157.90	-0.50	160.55	114.5	1.71	29.99	10078.61	Mitsui	1595.5	4.00	1820	1399	3.31	7.79	24088.9	CardinalHealth	86.04	-0.05	87.33	63.00	1.52	26.97	28404.65		
Woolworths	32.10 -0.04	38.92	29.11	4.66	14.92	31276.1	Nimble-SFR	49.26	1.17	57.50	23.88	-0.64	21.82	2012.05	Mitsui	1595.5	4.00	1820	1399	3.31	7.79	24088.9	Caterpillar	83.53	0.12	111.46	78.84	14.25	26.07	92311.68		
Belgium (EU)	107.85	0.25	105.95	71.50	1.63	23.68	19755.71	Orange	16.20	-0.04	16.32	15.82	0.00	16.32	48515.63	Mitsui	1595.5	4.00	1820	1399	3.31	7.79	24088.9	McDonald's	95.09	0.98	102.73	12.62	1.02	21.31	92311.68	
ArabShbNt	10.85	0.25	105.95	71.50	1.63	23.68	19755.71	Santander	69.77	-0.47	65.05	42.34	1.29	11.94	28921.34	Mitsui	1595.5	4.00	1820	1399	3.31	7.79	24088.9	McGraw Hill	102.19	4.03	102.57	71.93	1.03	23.74	27744.59	
Brazil (RS)	Ambev	18.10	0.26	18.19	14.99	1.81	21.38	100089.23	Santander	68.59	-0.39	82.25	52.59	3.62	19.10	45102.82	BNY Mellon	39.41	0.28	41.79	30.82	1.54	16.92	43462.42	Merck & Co	10.80	0.00	102.25	14.64	1.00	21.29	10341.54
BrcdoaBrasil	23.11	1.11	38.19	16.61	4.50	23.04	39.30	EDF	23.41	-0.94	29.90	20.90	5.78	1.38	49508.7	BNY Mellon	19.50	0.32	23.35	16.75	3.58	20.83	48613.36	Marsh & McLennan	55.80	0.00	55.80	55.80	0.00	12.25	10377.07	
BrdosCo	0.74 -0.04	35.95	1.49	1.30	27.63	9.28	9.85	20262.05	Eccler Int'l	96.20	-1.05	102.50	70.51	1.06	16.20	23283.03	BNY Mellon	19.50	0.32	23.35	16.75	3.58	20.83	48613.36	MasterCard	87.52	3.06	89.74	69.60	0.46	31.67	37402.78
ItauHdFibra	42.99	1.24	47.10	31.61	3.09	17.44	23077.23	Ecler Int'l	182.70	-0.35	184.20	136.95	2.12	21.97	19189.28	BNY Mellon	19.50	0.32	23.35	16.75	3.58	20.83	48613.36	McDonald's	95.09	0.98	102.73	12.62	1.02	21.31	92311.68	
Petrobras	9.37	0.52	23.50	7.88	6.31	4.50	30425.11	Eme	18.80	-0.03	18.85	17.64	0.00	16.32	48515.63	BNY Mellon	19.50	0.32	23.35	16.75	3.58	20.83	48613.36	MetLife	50.33	-0.08	57.57	46.10	2.35	10.86	51777	
Vale	10.21	0.51	38.74	14.26	2.54	1.74	30425.11	Vinci	18.11	0.07	20.81	17.26	0.00	16.32	48515.63	BNY Mellon	19.50	0.32	23.35	16.75	3.58	20.83	48613.36	MicroTec	31.94	0.92	36.35	50.00	2.10	10.07	34049.39	
Telef	15.21	0.41	38.74	14.26	2.54	1.74	30425.11	Woolworths	16.20	-0.04	16.25	10.32	0.00	16.32	48515.63	BNY Mellon	19.50	0.32	23.35	16.75	3.58	20.83	48613.36	Motorola Solutions	36.50	0.24	39.54	39.54	0.00	12.25	10377.07	
China (CS)	Alimentation	48.25	0.11	50.58	27.51	0.35	25.89	16172	BNY Mellon	148.20	-1.75	151.45	120.85	3.77	27.02	35.75	BNY Mellon	127.00	-0.01	120.00	120.00	0.00	12.25	10377.07								
BCE	55.77	-0.35	60.20	46.43	4.85	17.88	37472.69	BNY Mellon	68.59	-0.39	82.25	52.59	3.62	19.10	45102.82	BNY Mellon	127.00	-0.01	120.00	120.00	0.00	12.25	10377.07									
BkMnttBt	8.75	0.55	87.19	9.48	4.11	16.08	40638.5	BNY Mellon	121.25	-2.35	131.70	91.31	-1.76	27.05	11449.93	BNY Mellon	127.00	-0.01	120.00	120.00	0.00	12.25	10377									

FINANCIAL TIMES SHARE SERVICE

Main Market

	52 Week																															
	Price	+/-Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	Vol	000s	Price	+/-Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	Vol	000s	Price	+/-Chg	High	Low	Yld	P/E	Vol	000s								
Aerospace & Defence																																
AeroAstro	775.00	-7.50	810.00	580.00	0.61	18.32	58.8	58.1	FriendsLf	411.20	5.20	413.63	386.20	5.14	49.38	306.71		BislichMg	67.50	-0.50	126.00	67.00	5.93	9.76	0.2							
BAE Sys	528.00	3.00	534.38	374.10	3.81	91.22	1018.1	1.1	GinPeat	41.00	-0.20	41.32	34.16	5.01	59.88	29.7	Spirax-S	326.00	-9.00	321.1	254.8	1.84	24.32	111.1	RefineDef	57.00	1.30	130	5.50	5.50	4.74	1.1
Cheering	226.00	-2.75	289.50	181.50	3.19	-12.17	363.2	1.1	Harg Lans	1001	33.00	1513	827.00	2.24	29.39	1459.4	EVRaZ	88.50	-2.10	120.1	75.55	4.52	8.01	0.4	SEGRo	422.90	2.80	425.60	325.30	3.50	7.50	11.7
Cobham	336.00	5.10	345.10	250.30	2.88	32.49	216.1	1.1	HBM HftSf	97.15	0.45	105.80	70.25	-	2.47	6.4	Trifast	110.00	-1.38	134.00	73.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
Meggitt	552.00	3.50	555.50	421.70	2.31	21.12	4336.7	1.1	HenderGp	245.50	3.40	275.40	180.10	3.21	32.18	1516.2	Vitek	625.00	-5.00	690.00	539.00	3.88	15.62	5.33	FstQuan	670.50	-11.50	1037	675.50	0.33	48.53	987.9
RollsRoyce	905.00	-	1219	777.00	2.03	74.9	8435.5	1.1	ICAP	477.30	-8.00	480.90	338.70	4.61	27.77	132.5	Weir	1840	14.00	2848	1574	2.28	22.9	119.9	ScottMort	254.50	-1.80	258.00	189.00	1.14	25.09	947.1
Senior	322.60	3.70	324.80	249.00	1.59	18.32	351.3	1.1	IndvndR Skr	151.30	3.00	151.30	111.40	4.04	4.04	75.7	Man	172.90	-0.90	183.44	144.70	2.72	100.93	7295.9	FstQuan	206.30	-9.60	207.00	134.20	3.96	22.47	51.6
UltraElct	183.4	-7.00	198.	164.2	2.30	29.84	95.6	1.1	JG	483.00	-0.70	486.00	379.00	4.07	14.01	205.3	JardnMtr	41.00	-0.20	41.32	34.16	5.01	59.88	29.7	Redline	57.00	1.30	130	5.50	5.50	4.74	1.1
Automobiles & Parts									JardnSt \$*	34.79	-0.76	38.10	32.10	6.05	13.70	304.1	Tex	88.50	-8.50	101.50	72.55	4.52	13.66	3369.4	Lavendon	164.50	-1.25	247.75	155.50	2.16	13.56	8.6
FordMtr	16.36	0.11	18.12	13.26	2.75	11.38	23648.0	1.1	Investec	598.00	9.00	605.50	417.50	3.26	17.84	1427.0	Trifast	110.00	-1.38	134.00	73.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
GKN	376.00	2.30	468.00	281.10	2.10	12.83	4097.1	1.1	RHT	17.00	-2.60	16.70	13.20	3.24	23.44	151.7	FstQuan	282.50	-	288.00	225.00	3.70	5.47	2.1	Redline	57.00	-2.00	540.00	354.75	1.96	20.46	34.1
Banks									RHT	11.50	-0.50	10.10	9.35	3.75	20.51	2437.6	ICAP	454.00	-0.50	575.20	363.80	5.37	5.50	59.8	SEGRo	422.90	2.80	425.60	325.30	3.50	7.50	1246.9
ANZ A\$*	34.98	-0.11	35.27	30.47	5.35	12.68	5028.3	1.1	Smiths	95.00	-0.35	101.90	93.75	3.70	20.51	2437.6	Tex	189.70	-0.70	181.50	121.50	4.52	8.01	0.4	Redline	57.00	-0.10	130.50	95.50	2.16	13.56	8.6
BNB Grp	453.75	9.25	554.00	338.00	4.00	14.48	116.2	1.1	Smiths	95.00	-0.35	101.90	93.75	3.70	20.51	2437.6	Trifast	110.00	-1.38	142.00	70.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
BNB Grp	16.67	0.31	18.21	13.47	0.45	14.48	116.2	1.1	Smurfit	124.00	-1.70	121.00	124.00	3.21	21.97	1288.0	Treasury	124.00	-1.38	142.00	70.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
BankGe	224.00	-7.00	279.65	174.74	3.11	11.38	119.1	1.1	Smurfit	124.00	-1.70	121.00	124.00	3.21	21.97	1288.0	Trifast	110.00	-1.38	142.00	70.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
BankGe	0.30	0.01	0.39	0.24	-	-11.59	20965.5	1.1	Smurfit	124.00	-1.70	121.00	124.00	3.21	21.97	1288.0	Treasury	124.00	-1.38	142.00	70.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
BNB Grp	66.52	0.55	74.03	60.75	6.01	11.40	11.03	1.1	Smurfit	124.00	-1.70	121.00	124.00	3.21	21.97	1288.0	Treasury	124.00	-1.38	142.00	70.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
Barclays	253.35	2.35	271.52	201.75	2.07	14.25	11.7	1.1	Smurfit	124.00	-1.70	121.00	124.00	3.21	21.97	1288.0	Treasury	124.00	-1.38	142.00	70.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
Barclays	23.35	-0.01	18.12	13.26	2.75	11.38	23648.0	1.1	Smurfit	124.00	-1.70	121.00	124.00	3.21	21.97	1288.0	Treasury	124.00	-1.38	142.00	70.00	12.87	18.87	3.6	Shafrazy	668.00	17.00	1512	151.80	1.21	12.50	13.9
Barclays	16.36	-0.11	18.12	13.26	2.75	11.38	23648.0	1.1	Smurfit	124.00	-1.70	121.00	124.00	3.21	21.97	1288.0	Treasury	124.00	-1.38	142.00												

MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	
ACPI Global UCITS Funds Plc (IRL) www.acpi.com Regulated				ARTEMIS The PROFIT Hunter																				
ACPI Emerging Mkts Fd UCITS Fund USD A \$ 106.40 - -0.50 0.00																								
ACPI Global Credit UCITS Funds USD A \$ 13.84 - -0.00 0.00																								
ACPI Global Fixed Income UCITS Fund USD A \$ 151.35 - -0.20 0.00																								
ACPI India Fixed Income UCITS Fund USD A \$ 88.18 - -0.22 0.00																								
ACPI International Bond UCITS Fund USD A \$ 18.30 - -0.01 0.00																								
ACPI Select UCITS Funds PLC (IRL) Regulated																								
ACPI Balanced UCITS Fund USD Retail \$ 14.11 - -0.02 0.00																								
ACPI Balanced UCITS Fund USD Retail \$ 10.68 - -0.02 0.00																								
ACPI Balanced UCITS Fund USD Retail \$ 10.77 - -0.02 0.00																								
ACPI Balanced UCITS Fund USD Institutional \$ 10.00 - -0.00 0.00																								
ACPI Balanced UCITS Fund EUR Institutional \$ 10.00 - -0.00 0.00																								
ACPI Focused Equity UCITS Fund \$ 12.77 - -0.02 0.00																								
Abbey Life Assurance Company Limited (UK) 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth BH8 0AL 0860 9600 900 additional fund prices can be found at www.abbeylife.co.uk Insurances																								
Life Funds																								
Prop. Acc. Ser 2	1467.50	1540.70	-0.00																					
Selective Acc. Ser 2	1662.30	1646.40	-4.00																					
American Ser 4	1677.20	1765.70	7.20																					
Custodian Ser. 4	489.10	514.00	-1.40																					
Equity Ser. 4	570.30	600.30	-3.10																					
European Ser 4	576.70	607.10	6.70																					
Fixed Int. Ser. 4	897.80	945.00	-1.60																					
Int'l Ser. 4	441.50	454.70	-2.90																					
Japan Ser 4	357.60	376.50	8.10																					
Man. Ser. 4	1674.00	1782.70	7.80																					
Money Ser. 4	524.10	551.70	-0.00																					
Prop. Ser. 4	1052.50	1180.00	-0.00																					
International Ser 5	424.80	447.10	-2.80																					
Managed Ser 5	1610.60	1695.40	7.40																					
Money Ser 5	513.20	540.20	-0.00																					
Property Ser 5	1017.20	1068.00	-0.10																					
Pension Funds																								
American	1393.80	2025.50	7.90																					
Equity	5046.80	5312.40	25.90																					
European	1162.50	1240.20	-0.00																					
Fixed Int.	1644.50	1710.20	-3.80																					
International Partners	938.20	987.60	6.20																					
Artisan Partners Global Funds PLC (IRL) www.artisanfunds.com Regulated																								
Artisan Strategic Fund USD A \$ 7.49 - -0.02 0.00																								
Artisan Global Equity Fund USD A \$ 14.50 - -0.04 0.00																								
Artisan Global Bond Fund USD A \$ 11.84 - -0.04 0.00																								
Artisan Global Credit Fund USD A \$ 15.29 - -0.41 0.00																								
Artisan Global Fixed Income Fund USD A \$ 16.33 - -0.01 0.00																								
Artisan Global Multi Asset Fund USD A \$ 11.84 - -0.01 0.00																								
Formerly Hill Samuel Life Assurance Ltd (UK) 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 0AL 0865 6023 603 Managed Ser A (Life)																								
Formerly Hill Samuel Life Assurance Ltd (UK) 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 0AL 0865 6023 603 Managed Ser A (Pensions)																								
Formerly Target Life Assurance Ltd (UK) 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 0AL 0865 6023 603 Managed (Life)																								
Formerly Target Life Assurance Ltd (UK) 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 0AL 0865 6023 603 Managed Growth (Life)																								
Formerly Target Life Assurance Ltd (UK) 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 0AL 0865 6023 603 Managed (Pensions)																								
Additional fund prices can be found on our website																								
Aquila Capital																								
Allende Fund Management S.A.																								
FCA Recognised																								
ACI Opp. - Aenrus Fund EUR A \$ 104.29 - -0.18																								

MANAGED FUNDS SERVICE

Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield	Fund	Bid	Offer	+/- Yield			
Cf Odey Absolute Return Fund Hdgded	€ 1.76	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-Eastern Europe I EUR F	€ 287.97	-	-0.07 0.00	Your Portfolio Fund II Cl 2	112.40	-	-0.10 1.00	Sarac Global Income and Growth Fund	£ 1.34	-	-0.01 3.32	IGV - Acc Z	399.90	-	1.40 1.07	UK Income A Inc ♀ F	224.89	-	0.18 6.53			
Cf Odey Absolute Return Fund Hdgded	€ 1.63	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-Em Lcl Ccy Obt-I USD F	\$ 172.14	-	-1.95 -0.04	Your Portfolio Fund III Cl 2	116.60	-	0.00 1.10	For Save & Prosper please see Countrywide Assured				European	EGV - Acc S	267.80	-	1.40 -	UK Income B Acc ♀ F	257.14	-	0.20 6.24		
Cf Odey Absolute Return R	296.26	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-Emerging Markets+ USD F	\$ 549.55	-	-0.29 0.00	Your Portfolio Fund IV Cl 2	116.30	-	0.00 1.10					EGV - Acc Z	267.80	-	1.40 0.26	UK Income B Inc ♀ F	237.49	-	0.19 6.50			
Cf Odey Absolute Return I	305.25	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-Emerging Markets Index USD F	\$ 245.26	-	-1.41 0.00	Your Portfolio Fund V Cl 2	124.30	-	0.00 1.10					CVG - Acc S	107.60	-	0.70 -							
Cf Odey Portfolio Fund Class Institutional Azc	104.47	-	0.54 -	Pictet-Emerging Corporate Bonds I USD	\$ 104.90	-	0.02 0.00	Your Portfolio Fund VI Cl 2	126.80	-	0.00 0.60					CVG - Acc X	107.60	-	0.70 -							
Cf Odey Portfolio Fund Class P Retail Azc	104.21	-	0.54 -	Pictet-Emerging Markets High Dividend USD	\$ 109.63	-	0.20 0.00	Your Portfolio Fund VII Cl 2	128.50	-	0.10 0.90															
Cf Odey Portfolio Fund I Acc	147.61	-	0.84 0.05	Pictet-Emerging Markets Sust Eq USD	\$ 155.68	-	-0.29 0.00																			
Cf Odey Portfolio Fund I Inc	145.27	-	0.83 0.05	Pictet-Environmental Megatrend+ I USD F	\$ 559.86	-	-0.50 0.00																			
Cf Odey Portfolio Fund R Acc	143.88	-	0.82 0.05	Pictet-EU Bonds+ I F	\$ 146.80	-	-0.10 0.00																			
Cf Odey Portfolio Fund R Inc	143.84	-	0.82 0.05	Pictet-EU Corporate Bonds Ex Fin I USD F	\$ 203.03	-	-0.15 0.00																			
Odey Asset Management LLP Regulated	(CYM)	Pictet-EU Government Bonds I USD F	€ 159.21	-	0.17 0.00	Polinun Capital Partners Ltd Other International Funds																				
OEI MAC Inc A	€ 471.36	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-EU Yield I F	€ 241.52	-	-0.06 0.00	Developing Countries' A'	\$ 38.29	-	-0.63 0.00															
OEI Mac Inc B	€ 269.35	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-EU Inflation Linked Bonds I USD F	€ 176.62	-	-0.12 0.00	Emerging Markets Active	€ 42.90	-	-0.70 -															
OEI MAC Inc USD	€ 558.71	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-EU Short Mid-Term Bonds I F	€ 136.73	-	-0.01 0.00	Luxcellence Em Mkts Tech	€ 966.78	-	-10.05 0.00															
Odey European Inc EUR	€ 994.88	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-EU Sov Shrt Mtn Mtc Eur	€ 103.19	-	-0.01 0.00	Polinun Developing Countries	€ 852.58	859.83	0.00 0.00															
Odey European Inc A GBP	€ 380.40	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-EU Euroland Index IS EUR	€ 129.98	-	-0.24 0.00																			
Odey European Inc B GBP	€ 175.94	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-EU Europe Index I EUR F	€ 170.54	-	-0.43 0.00																			
Odey European Inc USD	€ 463.59	-	0.00 0.00	Pictet-European Equity Selection+ EUR F	€ 598.88	-	-0.79 0.00																			
Giano Capital EUR Inc	€ 470.97	-	15.47 0.00	Pictet-European Sust Eq+ EUR F	€ 237.66	-	-0.34 0.00																			
Odey Asset Management LLP FCA Recognised	(IRL)	Pictet-Globl Bonds I USD F	€ 122.47	-	0.45 0.00	Pictet-Globl Bonds I USD F	€ 122.47	-	-0.45 0.00																	
Odey Pan European EUR R	€ 341.77	-	0.76 -0.00	Pictet-Globl Emerging Currecency USD F	€ 98.25	-	-0.06 0.00																			
Odey Pan European GBP	€ 203.20	-	-0.89 -0.00	Pictet-Globl Emerging Debt USD F	€ 350.39	-	-0.10 0.00																			
Odey Allegro European EUR	€ 267.55	-	0.96 0.00	Pictet-Globl Megatrend Selection+ USD F	€ 228.41	-	-0.12 0.00																			
Odey Allegro European EUR A	€ 180.92	-	0.57 0.00	Pictet-Greater China+ USD F	€ 473.89	-	-0.76 0.00																			
Odey Allegro European GBP O	€ 284.07	-	0.41 0.00	Pictet-High Dividend Sel I EUR F	€ 154.48	-	-0.24 0.00																			
Odey Allegro European USD O	€ 232.56	-	0.43 0.00	Pictet-India Index USD F	€ 109.85	-	-0.50 0.00																			
Odey Allegro European EUR I	€ 255.20	-	0.91 0.00	Pictet-India Index USD F	€ 161.73	-	-0.19 0.00																			
Odey Allegro European EUR A	€ 163.60	-	0.58 0.00	Pictet-India Smaller Cos A	€ 149.34	-	-0.44 0.00																			
Odey Allegro European GBP A	€ 183.62	-	0.44 0.00	Pictet-Japan Index I JPY F	¥ 15320.51	-	-24.18 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International EUR	€ 171.07	-	0.25 0.00	Pictet-Japan Equities Opp+ JPY F	¥ 8868.77	-	-11.03 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International EUR Class	€ 175.18	-	-0.04 0.00	Pictet-Japan Equity Selection+ JPY F	¥ 10718.58	-	-20.05 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International GBP Class	€ 202.68	-	-0.49 0.00	Pictet-LATAM Index I USD F	€ 63.54	-	-1.30 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International USD O	€ 155.80	-	-0.30 0.00	Pictet-LATAM Index I USD F	€ 109.23	-	-1.84 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International EUR Class	€ 160.28	-	-0.04 0.00	Pictet-LATAM Index I USD F	€ 129.88	-	-0.04 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International EUR Class	€ 163.60	-	0.58 0.00	Pictet-Pacific Japan Index USD F	€ 363.73	-	-3.40 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International GBP A	€ 154.42	-	-0.32 0.00	Pictet-Premium Brands I EUR F	€ 161.98	-	-0.02 0.00																			
Odey Allegro International GBP B	€ 122.44	-	-0.12 0.00	Pictet-ST Money Mkt-I USD F	€ 140.56	-	-0.01 0.00																			
Odey Allegro Developed Markets Gbp I	€ 131.49	-	-0.46 0.00	Pictet-ST Money Mkt-I JPY F	¥ 109154	-	-9.55 0.00																			
Odey Allegro Developed Markets Gbp I	€ 133.62	-	-0.53 0.00	Pictet-ST Russia+ I USD F	€ 49.74	-	-0.35 0.00																			
Odey Atlas Fund GBP I	€ 105.20	-	0.64																							

The Commodities Note

Reasons not to sing along with US shale tub-thumpers

"I get knocked down, but I get up again; you're never going to keep me down." Chumbawamba's drinking song *Tubthumping* could be the US shale industry's anthem, writes **Ed Crooks**.

It may be taking a beating, but once the supply overhang is cleared and prices recover, it will spring back as strong as before.

That view has led many analysts to suggest that shale has put a ceiling on oil prices, typically seen as well below \$100 a barrel. As soon as crude recovers enough, the argument goes, US output will rebound and ensure that world markets are well supplied again.

Ed Morse at Citigroup defines a "W-shaped" recovery, as the US shale production response sets off another fall in prices.

This view seems to be conventional wisdom. It certainly looks like one of the factors keeping long-dated West Texas Intermediate at about \$70 a barrel.

But what if it is not true? Shale production may be more flexible and responsive to market

conditions than many "conventional" sources of oil, but the most significant threat to the industry is its need for financing.

Even with crude at \$100-plus, the US exploration and production sector was running a substantial cash deficit. Companies funded drilling programmes with a steady inflow of capital.

As Philip Verleger points out, financial markets are as important to US shale as the industry's knowledge base, ownership of mineral rights, infrastructure and government regulation.

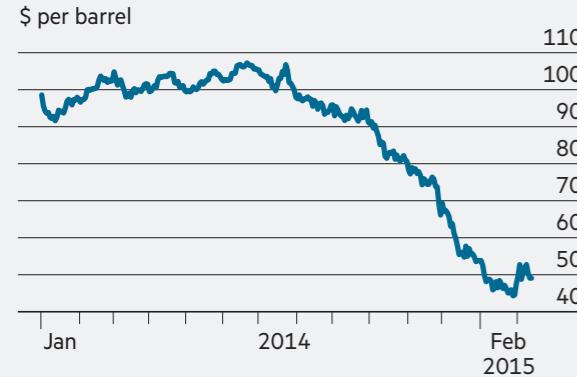
In the eight years 2007-14, the US exploration and production sector raised \$95bn in equity, \$206bn in bonds and \$574bn in syndicated loans, according to Dealogic.

If that flow of capital were to dry up, the shale industry would quickly run out of fuel.

And if investors become wary of putting their hand back in the fire, the rebound in US crude production will be slower — and future oil markets tighter — than many people expect.

www.ft.com/commodities-note

WTI oil price



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

fastFT

Q&A: Sweden's experiment with negative interest rates

The Swedish central bank has shocked markets by moving its main interest rate below zero.

How does it work? The Riksbank has cut the repurchase rate — the rate it charges (or not, as the case may be) banks to borrow money from it overnight against collateral — to minus 0.1 per cent.

Under what is called an "interest rate corridor" arrangement, the banks will be charged 0.2 per cent for leaving money on deposit at the Riksbank.

What do economists think it means? In effect, says Capital Economics economist Jonathan Loynes, the central bank is sending a message to lenders that it will "penalise them for sitting on money".

Lee Tyrrell-Hendry at RBS says: "This is the same basic idea as an interest rate cut".

Will the move increase access to credit?

Probably not, says Johan Javeus, an economist at SEB, a Swedish bank.

Sweden does not have a problem with lenders hoarding excess cash at the Riksbank instead of lending it on to customers. "We have no credit crunch," he says.

And the Riksbank is involved in very few overnight lending transactions.

What will it do instead?

It could help the central bank fend off deflation. One reason for the move is the cost of imported energy.

Does it help the economy?

Possibly. The Riksbank has a 2 per cent inflation target, and a weaker krona could help it get closer to this. The rest depends on economic sentiment and how companies respond if inflation rises.

www.ft.com/fastFT

Capital markets

Greek bonds and shares given a boost

ECB extends further €5bn in emergency loans to the country's banks

ANDREW BOLGER

Greek bond yields fell and shares extended gains yesterday as investors put an optimistic interpretation on the European Central Bank's decision to extend a further €5bn in emergency loans to the country's banks.

Even though Athens has so far failed to reach an agreement with its international creditors, the market appears to have been cheered by the fact that a copy of draft proposals spoke of extending the ECB's bailout agreement with Greece as a "bridge" to a new package. Finance ministers will meet again on Monday to seek a compromise.

Yields on three-year Greek government bonds, which move inversely to prices, fell 270 basis points to 18.36 per cent, while 10-year yields were down 58bp at 10.36 per cent.

The Athens General equity index rose 6.7 per cent, with shares of leading lenders Alpha Bank and Piraeus Bank showing double-digit percentage increases.

Paul Niven, head of multi-asset investment at F&C Investments, said: "For now markets are assuming that compromise between creditors and the Greek debtors will be reached. This sanguine view will probably be challenged in the weeks and months ahead, but Greece appears a more manageable problem for the eurozone at present."

The positive market reaction came in spite of the breakdown of eurozone ministers' first attempt to deal with the bailout demands made by the new gov-

ernment. The two sides failed even to agree how to take the negotiations forward after six hours of talks in Brussels on Wednesday.

Rabobank strategists said: "We are continuing to take a glass-half-full view of these negotiations, although we do acknowledge that the path to resolution and dissolution remains worryingly the same."

Suki Mann, head of European credit strategy at UBS, said risk assets should remain supported until negotiations between finance ministers resumed.

"A complete agreement on Greece's debt is unlikely to be reached at next Monday's meeting, but the financial pressure on Greece will increase and a deal is thought still likely to be found in the coming months," he said.

"That suggests a protracted period of uncertainty may be upon us, but Grexit

270bp
Fall in yields on three-year government bonds, to 18.36%

6.7%
Rise in Athens General equity index after ELA expands to €65bn

and debt haircut scenarios for Greece are still viewed as being very unlikely."

During yesterday's trading session it emerged that the ECB had decided to raise the amount of funding available to Greek banks through emergency loans, known as Emergency Liquidity Assistance, from €60bn to about €65bn.

The decision was made in light of fears that a spate of withdrawals could leave lenders in Greece short of funding. It came a day after the ECB removed a waiver that allowed Greek banks to use their country's bonds to secure loans from the central banks in spite of the bonds' junk rating.

"This news can be seen as good – or bad," said Mr Mann. "That the ECB isn't pulling the plug is the good, supporting equities and peripheral government bonds. The fact Greece needs the extra €5bn so soon is the bad."

Commodities. Backwardation

Tight supplies bring traders back to basics

Active strategies are being rewarded in copper, soyabean meal and even oil products

EMIKA TERAZONO

Commodity markets are going back to basics. Instead of moving up (or down) in lockstep with each other and with other assets, they are beginning to show variation.

The "backwardation" seen in some commodities is an indication of this change. The term – which means when it costs more to buy a commodity in the spot market than to buy it for future delivery – is not often heard in the commodities world these days.

Backwardation usually signals tight near-term supply and demand. When a commodity is in plentiful supply and prices are falling, the opposite condition, known as "contango", is seen.

Crude oil is in contango, as output from US shale and the absence of a cut by Opec, the producers' cartel, have boosted supplies at a time of weak demand.

Many grains have also been in contango, with ample supplies thanks to good weather around the world.

But several raw materials are in backwardation, including copper, oil products such as heating oil, soyabean meal and cocoa.

After four or five years of rising price correlation between commodities and other financial assets, with markets influenced by macroeconomic and political factors, raw materials seem to be returning to an era when they are more influenced by supply-and-demand fundamentals.

Between 2008 and 2012 correlations heightened between commodities and other financial markets, such as equities, and between individual raw material markets, caused by ultra-loose monetary policy in the US and stimulus in China.

The degree of correlation has been easing for some time, however. For commodities subsectors, "correlations fell in 2014 and have stayed low", says Kevin Norrish, head of commodities research at Barclays.

Lower correlations may favour traders and investors who understand the minutiae and idiosyncratic drivers of commodity markets.

Indeed trends in commodities markets, particularly the falling oil price, have made the sector an unattractive proposition for long-only investors. But



Worth holding on to: farmers in Argentina have been hoarding dollar-traded soybeans to boost their income security
Dhiraj Singh/Bloomberg

those using models that have selected commodities in backwardation would have made returns.

Such investors can gain on the "roll yield", where they profit when they roll over a position. In a backwardated market, they can sell existing positions for more than it costs to buy the next futures contract.

Active, value-oriented "strategies have performed quite well so far this year", says Mr Norrish.

The causes of backwardation vary in the case of different commodities. Despite expectations of a small supply surplus in 2014, copper has been in backwardation since last July.

Traders and analysts point to the unquantified amounts of the red metal that have been held in Chinese ports and used as collateral for financing deals. Also large purchases by a single buyer, thought by traders to be the Chinese State Reserve Bureau, sucked up copper for immediate delivery.

However, analysts expect more copper to come on to the market this year, easing the backwardation.

Chinese officials have clamped down on the use of metal as collateral in financing, after an alleged fraud was discovered in the port of Qingdao in May. Seasonally the physical market is also quieter before the lunar new year holiday this month.

With copper inventories at the London Metal Exchange rising, "the backwardation is shallowing", says Colin Hamilton at Macquarie Securities in London.

Soyabean meal has remained a tight market amid elevated demand for livestock and poultry feed.

Argentina is the largest exporter of soyabean meal, accounting for 40 per cent of world trade, but its output has been diminished by hoarding. In the face of high inflation and a falling currency, Argentine farmers have held on to their soyabeans, which are traded for immediate delivery.

in dollars, as a means of boosting their income security.

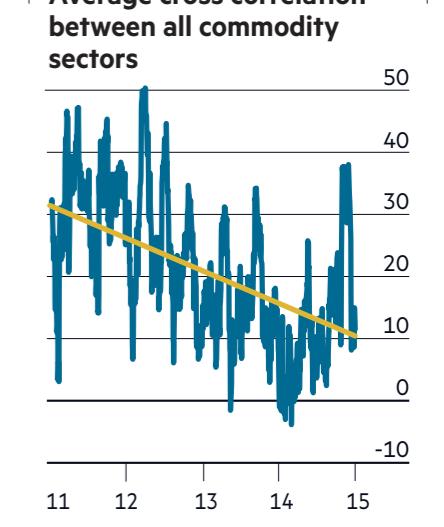
After being in backwardation for most of 2014, soyabean meal briefly fell into contango, but the near-term market has tightened again. "The demand side is very good," says Steve Nicholson at Rabobank in St Louis, Missouri.

Soyabean backwardation could signal that expansion in the US poultry and pork sectors "could be bigger than people are forecasting", he adds.

Crude oil has been in plentiful supply, but some oil products have been in backwardation. Heating oil has been in backwardation since October as users have been buying to take advantage of falling prices.

"Consumers of heating oil have been able to stock up," says Jodie Gunzberg, global head of commodities at S&P Dow Jones Indices. Winter demand in the northern hemisphere has also meant the commodity for immediate delivery has been tight.

Average cross correlation between all commodity sectors



Soyabean meal futures curve



Sources: Ecwin; Barclays Research; Thomson Reuters Eikon

Commodities

Oil watchdog unanimously votes in new chief

ANJLI RAVAL

The chief economist of the International Energy Agency is close to being confirmed as the head of the wealthy nations' energy watchdog.

Fatih Birol applied for the position of IEA executive director late last year and has been the preferred candidate to replace Maria van der Hoeven at the Paris-based organisation.

Turkey's foreign ministry said yesterday Mr Birol was "the first executive director in the history of the IEA who has been elected with the support of all member states".

Mr Birol has served as chief economist for the past nine of his 20-years tenure at the IEA, which advises 29 industrialised countries on energy policy. He is responsible for the watchdog's closely watched annual World Energy

outlook report, which lays out supply and demand forecasts for the next 20 years.

Mr Birol, who is a Turkish citizen, previously worked for Opec, which represents some of the biggest oil producers such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Venezuela.

He is considered more plain-spoken than Ms van der Hoeven, whose term expires on September 1. Mr Birol declined to comment.

A candidate from Greece who also applied for the top job did not have the support of important IEA member countries such as the US and Japan, according to people familiar with the matter.

The organisation declined to comment on the selection process, except to say: "The IEA secretariat has no information about the identities of potential

Currencies

Sterling lifted by hawkish inflation report

MICHAEL HUNTER

Sterling hit a six-week high against the dollar after markets focused on hawkish aspects of the Bank of England's quarterly inflation report.

Governor Mark Carney said the headlines highlighting low inflation masked stronger underlying dynamics in the UK and forecast a return to the BoE's 2 per cent inflation target within two years.

Markets had got ahead of themselves in expecting no interest rate rises until 2016, the BoE said, deepening speculation that UK rates could first rise from their historic, crisis-era low of 0.5 per cent early next year.

Markets reacted strongly, with falling gilt prices forcing yields higher, while sterling hit a session high of \$1.5391 against the dollar. By late afternoon in London the pound was up 1 per cent at

\$1.5381, and stood 0.4 per cent higher against the euro at £0.7412.

Rob Wood, chief UK economist at Berenberg, said the BoE "gave markets a qualified but hawkish nudge".

He added: "Markets had gone too far in pushing back the likely timing of the first BoE rate hike. Increases in borrowing costs are not imminent . . . [but] a hike by around this time next year looks about right."</

MARKETS & INVESTING

TRADING POST

Jamie Chisholm

Another day, another central bank surprise. The Riksbank caught traders on the hop by moving Sweden's rates into negative territory and joining the QE jamboree. The krona was whacked.

As we have noted before, as far as the market is concerned, the world's monetary guardians seem to have morphed from volatility compressors to volatility generators.

Unorthodox policy may still be delivering yield suppression, but now its spawn is uncertainty.

Yesterday Mark Carney, the Bank of England governor, highlighted the difficulties that our monetary guardians face in forecasting growth and inflation trajectories. Throw in lurching energy prices, and the uncertainty increases.

Of course how much all this is affecting investors is difficult to judge. The S&P 500 opened yesterday less than 1 per cent from its record, so it seems equity bulls can handle central bank surprises.

But that is because most of them have erred on the dovish side. A hawkish shock is a different animal.

For example, some analysts are wary that futures markets continue to price in the US Federal Reserve's first rate rise a few months later than they feel is likely.

And twitchiness caused by central bank uncertainty can damp bullish spirits at the margin.

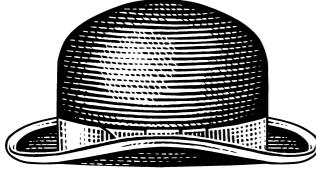
Carry trade activity can be a useful lubricant to risk appetite. But such strategies are less likely if currency volatility is too rich.

jamie.chisholm@ft.com

JPMorgan Global FX volatility Index



Source: Bloomberg



London

Diageo takes a fall amid concern over demand for spirits

Bryce Elder

Worries about subdued demand for spirits put **Diageo** among the fallers yesterday.

Goldman Sachs added the Smirnoff maker to its "sell" list, sending the shares 1.2 per cent lower at £18.63.

Slowing emerging markets and stagnant growth elsewhere made utilities, energy and telecoms more attractive to income investors than consumer staples, the broker said.

"Diageo's exposure to underperforming and price aggressive categories such as vodka and rum is likely to sustain the company's multi-year underperformance versus the overall market," the broker added.

Goldman's £16.80 target on the shares included a 15 per cent chance that the distiller would become a takeover target, with the low probability

Global overview

Ukraine ceasefire lifts stocks while weak US data weigh on the dollar

Monetary policy is back in focus with Sweden's krona easing and Bank of England inflation report supporting the pound

JAMIE CHISHOLM AND STEPHEN SMITH

Stocks rallied as risk appetite was boosted by news of a Ukraine ceasefire deal but soft US data helped push the dollar and Treasury yields lower.

Monetary policy was also in focus after Sweden became the latest central bank to penalise depositors, hitting the krona, and the Bank of England presented its latest inflation report, boosting the pound.

The FTSE Eurofirst 300 rose 0.6 per cent and the S&P 500 climbed 1 per cent while the Nasdaq Composite hit a 15-year high – aided by well-received earnings from Cisco Systems – as investors hoped a ceasefire in Ukraine would help ease tensions between Russia and the west. "It was a risk on day for everything aided by the Ukraine ceasefire agreement with equity and bond markets higher," said Divyang Shah, of IFR Markets.

The International Monetary Fund said it would extend a \$17.5bn facility to Kiev to help its battered economy.

Moscow's Micex equity index advanced 2.2 per cent but the rouble remained under pressure, slipping 0.5 per cent to Rbs65.19, although off its session low.

The rebound in Russian stocks was helped by higher oil prices, on which the country's economy is highly dependent, with Brent crude up 4.4 per cent to \$57.05 a barrel.

However, investor effervescence was being contained by disappointment over some US economic reports and the drawn-out Greek debt crisis.

US retail sales fell a larger than



Apple of the market's eye: FT.com/video

iPhone maker has become the world's first \$700bn company. The FT's John Authers says it has the earnings to justify it

expected 0.8 per cent in January and weekly jobless claims rose by more than forecast – data that pulled 10-year Treasury yields back from five-week highs of 2.05 per cent to trade at 1.98 per cent, down 3 basis points for the day.

The impact of the soft figures was particularly felt on currency markets with the dollar index sliding 0.9 per cent.

Eurozone finance ministers' first attempt to grapple with the bailout demands made by the new Greek government failed, following several hours of discussions late into the night on Wednesday.

Attention now turns to a second meeting on Monday. If no agreement can be reached then, Athens is likely to head

into March without any bailout help for the first time in nearly five years, an outcome that many people worry could spark market turmoil.

Greek assets and the euro were given a boost on news of additional liquidity from the European Central Bank. "The ECB will extend a further €5bn to Greek banks via the ELA [Emergency Liquidity Assistance]," said Mr Shah. "The game of chicken continues between Greece and EU but we reiterate that a deal is unlikely ahead of the weekend."

"The consensus continues to be that an agreement will be reached but uncertainty remains as to what form this will take but at the same time the Grexit risks are seen as increasing." Greek

three-year borrowing costs fell 271bp but remained elevated at 18.04 per cent. Madrid's 10-year bond yields fell 1bp to 1.62 per cent, suggesting there was little Greek-inspired credit risk contagion.

The euro climbed 0.6 per cent to \$1.1401 but was still only about 2 per cent above its 11-year trough touched last month after the European Central Bank's announcement of a €60bn-a-month quantitative easing programme.

German 10-year Bund yields slipped 3bp to 0.32 per cent as some investors continued to seek perceived havens. Gold rose \$5 to \$1,222 an ounce, bouncing off four-week lows. Sterling climbed to its strongest versus the euro in seven years before giving up some gains to stand 0.4 per cent higher at £0.7409 – after the Bank of England's quarterly inflation report was considered a bit more upbeat than expected.

Sweden's central bank cut interest rates from zero to minus 0.1 per cent and announced a SKr10bn quantitative easing package, in an attempt to bolster growth. The move surprised the market and the krona slid 1 per cent before steady at SKr8.4193 per dollar, down 0.6 per cent.

In Japan, the Nikkei 225 rose 1.9 per cent as investors returned from a day's holiday to see the yen had weakened against the dollar to Y120 – a five-week low. Tokyo stocks tend to display quite a tight inverse correlation to the yen, partly as Japan's exporters are seen receiving a competitive boost from the currency's declines. Nikkei futures fell sharply after Tokyo closed after unconfirmed reports that the Bank of Japan thinks any further stimulus measures would be counterproductive and consumer sentiment would be hurt by more yen weakness. The dollar slid 1.3 per cent to Y118.92 in response. Hong Kong's Hang Seng rose 0.4 per cent. The Shanghai Composite rose 0.5 per cent.

Additional reporting by Jennifer Thompson in Hong Kong

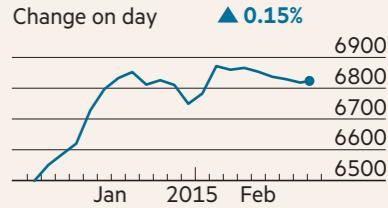
Markets update

S&P 500 index ▲ 0.95%



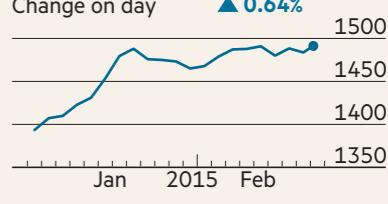
US equities Wall Street had a positive session with a rally in technology stocks pushing the Nasdaq to a 15-year high, helping to offset the impact of lacklustre economic data

FTSE 100 index ▲ 0.15%



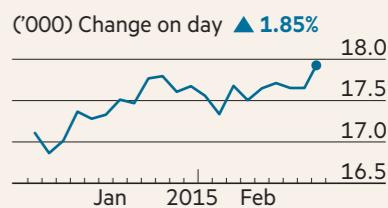
UK equities The FTSE 100 stabilised after a four-day slide as the London market rose 0.2 per cent. But Diageo fell after Goldman Sachs said investors should sell the distiller's shares

Eurofirst 300 index ▲ 0.64%



European equities The FTSE Eurofirst 300 jumped, boosted by a Ukraine peace agreement and Swedish economic stimulus measures, as Greek assets had a better session

Nikkei 225 index ▲ 1.85%



Asian equities The Nikkei 225 Average ended the day at its highest level since July 2007, as the yen weakened and data showed a surge in machine orders

London

Diageo takes a fall amid concern over demand for spirits

Bryce Elder

Worries about subdued demand for spirits put **Diageo** among the fallers yesterday.

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Indices	Close	Day's change
FTSE 100	6828.11	9.94
FTSE 250	16809.42	176.82
FTSE 350	3741.88	10.87
FTSE All-Share	3674.58	10.58
FTSE All-Share Yield	3.30	-
FTSE 100 Futures	6779.00	19.50
10 yr Gilt Yield	2.53	-0.29
20yr Gilt All-Share Ratio	0.70	-

"should continue reaping the benefits from being a pioneer in using digital to grab the attention of a new generation of younger luxury consumers who use digital media to make purchase decisions", said RBC.

"Online development is already a key contributor to Burberry's growth in the US and UK, and has huge potential in China according to our consumer survey."

Shire rallied 4.6 per cent to £49.97 even after 2015 guidance came in at the low end of analysts' expectations. Dollar headwinds meant the drugmaker's shares had underperformed peers in the two weeks before the results.

AO World slid 6 per cent to 304.6p after Panmure Gordon said the retailer was "grossly overvalued".

Putting a 152p share price target on AO, the broker estimated that half of AO World's 2014 operating profit had come from sales of extended warranties, which it said were vulnerable to changes in legislation or accounting treatment.

A deteriorating gross margin meant AO would reach peak UK profitability within a decade, which would suggest the group's continental European operations were priced in at 1.6 times the value of the UK business in spite of operating for just four months, it said.

Afren dived 20.6 per cent to 7.1p ahead of Seplat's deadline today to make a formal offer for the African explorer or walk away.

Imagination Technologies rose 3.1 per cent to 265p, a 15-month high. After the close, Intel said it was selling its 4.9 per cent stake in the chip designer.

reflecting a paucity of potential suitors. The wider market stabilised after a four-day slide, lifting the FTSE 100 0.2 per cent, or 9.94 points, to 6,828.11. After Russia's ceasefire with Ukraine **Coca-Cola HBC** led the FTSE risers, up 6.2 per cent to £11.59. Russia and Ukraine together account for 26 per cent of the bottler's sales.

Paper maker **Mondi**, which derives 15 per cent of its earnings from Russia, rose 2.4 per cent to £12.58.

Any easing of sanctions on Moscow

combined with upgrades following Mondi's upbeat trading update this week "could lead to a catch-up trade" in the shares, Merrill Lynch said.

Burberry hit a record high, up 3.6 per cent to £18.87, after RBC started coverage with an "outperform" rating and £20 target. The fashion brand

the rally in Cisco shares pushed the Nasdaq Composite to its highest level since December 2007.

Tesla fell nearly 7 per cent to \$198.44, after the maker of electric cars delivered fewer vehicles than expected in the final three months of the year and reported a wider than expected fourth-quarter loss. It said: "Delivering those cars was physically impossible due to a combination of customers being on vacation, severe winter weather and shipping problems."

Travel booking site **Expedia** advanced 15 per cent to \$90.44, after it agreed to acquire Orbitz Worldwide for an enterprise value of \$1.6bn, or \$12 a share in cash. The deal represented a 25 per cent premium to Orbitz's closing share price on Wednesday.

Materials proved the best bet on the S&P 500, climbing 1.5 per cent as stocks rallied on news of a Ukraine ceasefire deal.

The S&P 500 rose 0.7 per cent to 2,082.21, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 0.4 per cent to 17,933.97, and the Nasdaq Composite rose 0.8 per cent to 4,838.81.

Kellogg reported a loss of \$293m, or 82 cents a share, in the three months that ended in December. Sales were flat at \$3.5bn. Analysts had forecast earnings of 67 cents a share, on sales of \$3.6bn. The group is adapting to a shift in consumer habits as Americans opt for healthier breakfast foods.

Kellogg shares, which have gained 7 per cent in the past year, fell 4 per cent to \$63.63. Adjusted earnings per share of 84 cents missed estimates of 92 cents.

Better fiscal second-quarter results than expected pushed shares of **Cisco Systems** up 8 per cent to \$29.09. The communications equipment maker said profits had risen 68 per cent from a year earlier to \$2.4bn, or 46 cents a share, for the three months to the end of January. Sales had climbed 7 per cent to \$1.9bn, ahead of expectations.

The company lifted its quarterly dividend from 19 cents to 21 cents a share, in line with expectations.

The rally in Cisco shares pushed the Nasdaq Composite to its highest level since December 2007.

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Markets & Investing

FINANCIAL TIMES

INSIGHT

Ralph Atkins



Greece's drama could spur experiment with bonds that go 'pop'

Don't understand "coco bonds" but afraid to ask? Anyone concerned about how Europe will tackle its mountainous debts – including in Greece – is advised to brush up quickly.

Cocos, or "contingent convertibles", are bonds whose features change according to the issuers' circumstances. Largely unnoticed beyond a few specialists, Europe has pioneered bank cocos, which convert into shares or are wiped out when issuers hit trouble. They are liked by regulators and cash-strapped European governments because they provide financial cushions in crises – and reduce the cost to taxpayers of bailing out banks.

Cocos have come of age. Moody's this week reported \$288bn in cocos had been issued by banks it rates since an inaugural Lloyds issue in 2009, and predicted issuance in 2015 would match last year's \$174bn. Europe had accounted for more than half – but the market was being increasingly driven by banks in Asia, especially China.

For investors, coco bonds offer temptingly higher yields, – although there are serious worries about whether their riskiness is priced accurately. More broadly, cocos are helping Europe manage its outsize banking system. They offer a different way of distributing risk between creditors and debtors, and potentially of making bank crises easier to resolve and less politically controversial. Credit Suisse last year even started to pay part of its top bankers' deferred bonuses in coco bond equivalents – ensuring their interests lie in the bank's long-term stability.

So could the coco concept be developed by other issuers besides banks – including governments? The high-stakes drama over Greece's plight and eurozone membership has served one positive purpose, stirring debate over how Europe will manage exceptional indebtedness when economic growth is sluggish and inflation low.

Europe has a creditor-friendly tradition, whether borrowers are consumers, businesses or governments. Bankruptcy laws are less flexible than in the US and the idea of a sovereign debt restructuring horrified European policy makers until Greece's work out in 2012. Such rigidity imposes financial discipline, but arguably makes acute debt crises much messier and harder to resolve.

Yanis Varoufakis, Greece's new finance minister, has suggested one way of shifting the balance. He is pushing for part of his country's debt to be swapped for bonds linked to gross domestic product so Athens' obligations vary according to how well the Greek economy performs. GDP-linked bonds have long been discussed by economists. But so have "sovereign coco" bonds – and their proponents argue they could prevent high-stakes Greece-like crises from erupting in the first place.

In March 2011, Axel Weber, then president of Germany's Bundesbank, proposed clauses in eurozone government bonds that would automatically extend their maturity by three years if a country had to be bailed out. Bank of England economists have made similar proposals, suggesting sovereign cocos that "pop" when the IMF is called in.

It is probably worth remaining sceptical. While cocos are growing in banking, they have still to be tested in crises; one fear is that they may work when a single bank is in difficulties but simply encourage panic when stresses are more general. Stronger rules gave banks an incentive to issue cocos. The attraction is not so obvious for eurozone governments. They would have to pay more to borrow and coco clauses might be interpreted as a sign that countries expected trouble. Indeed, some might worry that cocos would encourage recklessness. There would probably need to be continent-wide agreement on them.

It is too late for Greek sovereign cocos. Their big attraction, which explains the Bundesbank's early backing, would be future, potentially massive cost savings. A 2013 Bank of England research paper estimated initial international support for Greece would have been slashed from €110bn to less than €45bn if the maturity of its bonds had been extended ahead of its bailout. "Sovereign cocos could significantly reduce the risk to global taxpayers and make it easier to negotiate a debt restructuring in the event of insolvency," the paper concluded.

In other words, Greece would not now be such a problem for Europe.

ralph.atkins@ft.com

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Stimulus is helping to keep the region's junk bonds ahead of US counterparts – for now

VIVIANNE RODRIGUES — NEW YORK

With oil prices tumbling and market volatility on the rise in the last quarter of 2014, global investors in high-yield corporate debt made an asset allocation call: sell dollar-denominated junk debt and keep, or buy, equivalent paper denominated in euros.

It was a good call. Total returns on euro high-yielding debt outperformed the dollar-denominated variety late last year and into the start of 2015. But with the first quarter well under way, many investors are still sticking to that strategy, despite a sharp sell-off in some corners of the US junk bond market that took it down to multiyear lows and leaves it looking ripe for a rebound.

Lower bond prices, a rebound in oil markets and improving economic growth prospects in the US should be enough to tempt many global fund managers to return, helping sustain broad-based gains for US junk debt.

But while flows into mutual funds and exchange-traded funds investing in US corporate high-yield debt have shown great improvement in the past couple of weeks after a wave of redemptions, analysts say the case for euro high-yield remains strong.

"There's no doubt that the prognosis for the US economy is much better than that of the eurozone, and oil prices are showing signs of restabilisation," says Mike Kessler, European credit strategist at Barclays. "All of that is supportive to the US high-yield market."

"But Europe has one very strong technical factor in its favour, and that is the massive amount of stimulus the European Central Bank is pumping into the economy, while in the US the Federal Reserve remains committed to its pledge of raising interest rates this year."

It is still "too soon" to determine whether the ECB's latest stimulus meas-

European boom

High-yield corporate debt

Option adjusted spread (basis points)

Jul 2014 US Federal Reserve chairwoman Janet Yellen warns that high-yield valuations 'appear stretched'

Oct 2014 Concerns over the global economy triggered a 'flash crash' in US Treasury yields

Nov 2014 Oil prices tumble as Opec decides not to cut its production

Jan 2015 European Central Bank president Mario Draghi launches larger than expected bid to revitalise the eurozone economy

Jun 2014

2014

2015

Feb 2015

FT graphic. Source: Barclays

Sector performance

Total return previous 3-months (%)

3.1% 2.5% 1.3% -0.4%

3.5% 3.0% 2.0% 1.0% -0.5%

Euro HY US \$ HY US \$ IG S&P 500

HY = high yield, IG = investment grade

Investors will accept lower liquidity in exchange for higher ratings and less oil exposure

ures will have a similar impact on the European market for riskier corporate debt to the one seen in the US after three rounds of quantitative easing, says Mr Kessler. The Fed's ultra-easy monetary policy after the financial crisis brought benchmark US interest rates to record lows and contributed to a big push into riskier securities, such as junk bonds.

The European high-yield market has boomed in the past two years, but in part this has been a result of changes in bank lending practices throughout the region, which have sent borrowers to capital markets.

Bond issuance in the region has swelled, with the euro high-yield market growing to about \$365bn, according to Barclays indices. That is still much smaller than the \$1.3tn US market, but most issues in Europe carry higher ratings, Ba2/Ba3 from Moody's against B1/B2 for the US index.

That sent regional government and corporate bond yields, which move inversely to prices, to multiyear lows.

Moreover while about 15 per cent of the US high-yield market is exposed to the volatile oil sector, that exposure is less than 1 per cent in Europe. "A lot of investors are willing to bypass the lower liquidity of European markets in exchange for higher ratings and less exposure to oil prices," says Sabur Moini, a high-yield portfolio manager at Payden & Rygel.

Last month the ECB launched its latest round of large-scale quantitative easing, with a €60bn-a-month programme of asset purchases. In addition Mario Draghi, ECB president, said it would buy more than €1tn in assets, including government and private sector bonds, by September next year.

That sent regional government and corporate bond yields, which move inversely to prices, to multiyear lows.

"Investors are getting squeezed in Europe. They are trying to maintain

yields by going down in quality," says Marty Fridson, chief investment officer at Lehmann, Livian, Fridson Advisors. "In the meantime the US is offering a 'magnificent' 1.97 per cent on its 10-year government note."

The US corporate debt market swung from "fairly valued to very cheap" versus Europe in the past month, he says.

For now bets on high-yield bonds in Europe have been rewarded. Total return on the debt in the past three months stands at 3.1 per cent, compared with a negative 0.4 per cent for high-yield debt in the US, according to Barclays. The S&P 500 has gained 1.3 per cent in the same period.

"Frankly Europe is not where I see the best opportunities in high-yield looking forward," says Mr Moini. "But with the giant ECB programme, we may still see even more people moving into that market."

Commodities

Gold demand comes off its four-year low

HENRY SANDERSON

Global gold demand fell 4 per cent last year to its lowest level since 2010 as China failed to repeat its record buying of 2013, according to the World Gold Council.

Demand in China had fallen 38 per cent, as sales of gold bars and coins halved thanks to a recovering domestic equity market and the "strong impact" of Communist party's anti-corruption campaign, the industry body said.

Gold has bounced back more than 3 per cent this year on haven buying amid turmoil in the eurozone, after falling 28 per cent over the past two years as global inflation failed to materialise.

In India, despite government restrictions aimed at limiting imports of the precious metal, jewellery demand had hit a record 662.1 tonnes in 2014, the WGC said in a report released today.

India surpassed China to become the largest consumer last year.

Chinese jewellery demand weakened, and was 33 per cent lower than in 2013. Demand failed to increase in the fourth quarter, before the lead-up to the lunar new year, as it normally does.

Small gold bars have been affected most by President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign, according to the report.

Chinese jewellery demand has been shifting to more expensive items, with 18-carat gold increasingly popular. "The luxury end of the market was relatively healthy – something that

can be exemplified by Cartier now having more boutiques in China than in the US," the WGC said.

Demand in Asia has been supported by the expansion of market infrastructure and new products. A CME Group gold contract started trading last month in Hong Kong, and the Shanghai Gold Exchange has started its international board in the city's free trade zone.

India and China together accounted for 54 per cent of consumer gold demand last year, up from 33 per cent in 2005.

In Europe worries over the fate of the euro had led to higher demand for gold bars and coins in the final three months of the year, said Alistair Hewitt, head of market intelligence at the WGC.

The price of gold in euros rose 14 per cent last year as the single currency weakened versus the dollar.

"People are fearful of potential political risks in the EU, the election of the far-left party in Greece and the impact of quantitative easing," said Mr Hewitt. "Those kinds of factors generated an upsurge in bar and coin demand in the fourth quarter."

Wolfgang Wrzesniok-Rossbach, chief executive of Degussa, one of Europe's largest gold dealers, said January had been the best month for gold sales since the company was founded three years ago.

That followed an annual high for 2014 in November, he added. He put the precious metal's improved performance down to "angst that something could go wrong with the euro".

