HSBC

Educators FINANCIAL GROUP

Asset Management

US banks under pressure again

Investment event | 2 May 2023

Another US regional bank failure

In the aftermath of March's US banking sector turbulence, investor nerves were calmed by data showing a stabilisation in deposit outflows and declining use of the Federal Reserve's liquidity tools. Risk asset performance over the second half of March and April was impressive.

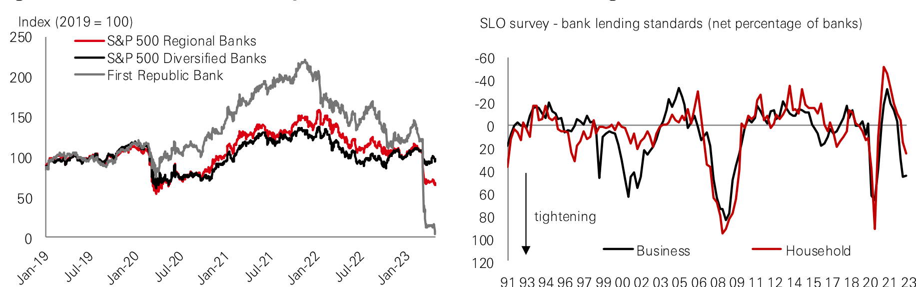
On 1 May, however, First Republic Bank was placed into receivership, with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) subsequently selling the bank's deposits and most of its assets to JPMorgan Chase Bank, concluding an auction process over the weekend. This appears to be the second largest bank failure in U.S. history, following just weeks after the March receiverships of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) and Signature Bank of New York, which we covered in our recent IEs.

Pockets of vulnerability

The immediate market response to these latest events has been fairly muted relative to the collapse of SVB and Signature. Problems at First Republic were well known among investors, reflected in the bank's share price performance (Figure 1).

We continue to view the current situation as idiosyncratic in nature, affecting a small pocket of relatively loosely regulated institutions which are the most vulnerable to a higher-rate environment. The failure of First Republic echoes the SVB episode – namely a deposit base made of large uninsured depositors, and assets that had fallen in value amid rising interest rates. Broader measures of banking sector health remain in good shape and do not signal a systemic problem. In aggregate, banks also continue to benefit from higher net interest margins and macroeconomic resiliency.

Figures 1 and 2: Bank stock performance, and bank lending standards



Source: Bloomberg, as at 2 May 2023

Macro impact

The situation remains uncertain and is very fluid. There are risks of further bank failures and consolidation in the sector. Recent events are also likely to trigger more conservative lending practices among banks as they seek to protect their balance sheets. Credit conditions were tightening even before recent events (Figure 2).

This reinforces our expectation of a US recession later this year, exacerbating an already worsening outlook for US corporates and households amid higher interest rates as the Fed continues its tightening cycle and as the lagged effects of previous rate hikes filter through into the real economy.

Defensive positioning

We continue to argue for a defensive positioning in portfolios given macro headwinds and market pricing and analyst expectations for GDP and corporate profits which look unrealistic to us.

- Uncertainty over the course of monetary policy and noisy economic data is likely to result in further bouts of volatility. Our central scenario is consistent with "choppy waters" for risk assets over the next 12 months, and room for downside in market prices.
- Our macro view is consistent with a preference for short-duration fixed income assets, especially US Treasuries, which we see performing well as recession bites. We also want to take advantage of the carry that high quality credits offer and believe solid corporate balance sheets offers protection against default risk.
- Finally, we remain positive on most EM asset classes given tailwinds from relatively low valuations, cautious investor positioning, China re-opening and a widening growth differential, and the prospect of Fed cuts and further dollar weakness later in the year.

This commentary provides a high level overview of the recent economic environment, and is for information purposes only. These views presented are based on our global views and may not necessarily align with our local views. It is a marketing communication and does not constitute investment advice or a recommendation to any reader of this content to buy or sell investments nor should it be regarded as investment research.

The immediate market response to failure of First Republic has been fairly muted relative to the collapse of SVB and Signature

Problems at First Republic were well known among investors. We continue to view the current situation as idiosyncratic in nature

Recent events are likely to trigger more conservative lending practices among banks as they seek to protect their balance sheets. Credit conditions were tightening even before recent events. This reinforces our expectation of a US recession later this year

We continue to argue for a defensive positioning in portfolios given macro headwinds and market pricing and analyst expectations which look unrealistic to us

For Professional Clients and intermediaries within countries and territories set out below; and for Institutional Investors and Financial Advisors in Canada and the US. This document should not be distributed to or relied upon by Retail clients/investors.
The value of investments and the income from them can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. The capital invested in the fund can increase or decrease and is not guaranteed. The performance figures contained in this document relate to past performance, which should not be seen as an indication of future returns. Future returns will depend, inter alia, on market conditions, fund manager's skill, fund risk level and fees. Where overseas investments are held the rate of currency exchange may cause the value of such investments to go down as well as up. Investments in emerging markets are by their nature higher risk and potentially more volatile than those inherent in some established markets. Economies in Emerging Markets generally are heavily dependent upon international trade and, accordingly, have been and may continue to be affected adversely by trade barriers, exchange controls, managed adjustments in relative currency values and other protectionist measures imposed or negotiated by the countries and territories with which they trade. These economies also have been and may continue to be affected adversely by economic conditions in the countries and territories in which they trade. Mutual fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.
The contents of this document may not be reproduced or further distributed to any person or entity, whether in whole or in part, for any purpose. All non-authorised reproduction or use of this document will be the responsibility of the user and may lead to legal proceedings. The material contained in this document is for general information purposes only and does not constitute advice or a recommendation to buy or sell investments. Some of the statements contained in this document may be considered forward looking statements which provide current expectations or forecasts of future events. Such forward looking statements are not guarantees of future performance or events and involve risks and uncertainties. Actual results may differ materially from those described in such forward-looking statements as a result of various factors. We do not undertake any obligation to update the forward-looking statements contained herein, or to update the reasons why actual results could differ from those projected in the forward-looking statements. This document has no contractual value and is not by any means intended as a solicitation, nor a recommendation for the purchase or sale of any financial instrument in any jurisdiction in which such an offer is not lawful. The views and opinions expressed herein are those of HSBC Asset Management at the time of preparation, and are subject to change at any time. These views may not necessarily indicate current portfolios' composition. Individual portfolios managed by HSBC Asset Management primarily reflect individual clients' objectives, risk preferences, time horizon, and market liquidity. Foreign and emerging markets. Investments in foreign markets involve risks such as currency rate fluctuations, potential differences in accounting and taxation policies, as well as possible political, economic, and market risks. These risks are heightened for investments in emerging markets which are also subject to greater illiquidity and volatility than developed foreign markets. This commentary is for information purposes only. It is a marketing communication and does not constitute investment advice or a recommendation to any reader of this content to buy or sell investments nor should it be regarded as investment research. It has not been prepared in accordance with legal requirements designed to promote the independence of investment research and is not subject to any prohibition on dealing ahead of its dissemination. This document is not contractually binding nor are we required to provide this to you by any legislative provision.
All data from HSBC Asset Management unless otherwise specified. Any third party information has been obtained from sources we believe to be reliable, but which we have not independently verified.
HSBC Asset Management is the brand name for the asset management business of HSBC Group, which includes the investment activities provided through our local regulated entities. HSBC Asset Management is a group of companies in many countries and territories throughout the world that are engaged in investment advisory and fund management activities, which are ultimately owned by HSBC Holdings Plc. (HSBC Group). The above communication is distributed by the following entities:
• In Argentina by HSBC Global Asset Management Argentina S.A., Sociedad Gerente de Fondos Comunes de Inversión, Agente de administración de productos de inversión colectiva de FCI N°1;
• In Australia, this document is issued by HSBC Bank Australia Limited ABN 48 006 434 162, AFSL 232595, for HSBC Global Asset Management (Hong Kong) Limited ARBN 132 834 149 and HSBC Global Asset Management (UK) Limited ARBN 633 929 718. This document is for institutional investors only, and is not available for distribution to retail clients (as defined under the Corporations Act). HSBC Global Asset Management (Hong Kong) Limited and HSBC Global Asset Management (UK) Limited are exempt from the requirement to hold an Australian financial services license under the Corporations Act in respect of the financial services they provide. HSBC Global Asset Management (Hong Kong) Limited is regulated by the Securities and Futures Commission of Hong Kong under the Hong Kong laws, which differ from Australian laws. HSBC Global Asset Management (UK) Limited is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority of the United Kingdom and, for the avoidance of doubt, includes the Financial Services Authority of the United Kingdom as it was previously known before 1 April 2013, under the laws of the United Kingdom, which differ from Australian laws;
• in Bermuda by HSBC Global Asset Management (Bermuda) Limited, of 37 Front Street, Hamilton, Bermuda which is licensed to conduct investment business by the Bermuda Monetary Authority;
• in Canada by HSBC Global Asset Management (Canada) Limited which provides its services as a dealer in all provinces of Canada except Prince Edward Island and also provides services in Northwest Territories. HSBC Global Asset Management (Canada) Limited provides its services as an advisor in all provinces of Canada except Prince Edward Island;
• in Chile: Operations by HSBC's headquarters or other offices of this bank located abroad are not subject to Chilean inspections or regulations and are not covered by warranty of the Chilean state. Further information may be obtained about the state guarantee to deposits at your bank or on www.sbif.cl;
• in Colombia: HSBC Bank USA NA has an authorized representative by the Superintendencia Financiera de Colombia (SFC) whereby its activities conform to the General Legal Financial System. SFC has not reviewed the information provided to the investor. This document is for the exclusive use of institutional investors in Colombia and is not for public distribution;
• in Finland, Norway, Denmark and Sweden by HSBC Global Asset Management (France), a Portfolio Management Company authorised by the French regulatory authority AMF (no. GP99026) and through the Stockholm branch of HSBC Global Asset Management (France), regulated by the Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority (Finansinspektionen);
• in France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Portugal, Greece by HSBC Global Asset Management (France), a Portfolio Management Company authorised by the French regulatory authority AMF (no. GP99026);
• in Germany by HSBC Global Asset Management (Deutschland) GmbH which is regulated by BaFin (German clients) respective by the Austrian Financial Market Supervision FMA (Austrian clients);
• in Hong Kong by HSBC Global Asset Management (Hong Kong) Limited, which is regulated by the Securities and Futures Commission. This document has not been reviewed by the Securities and Futures Commission;
• in India by HSBC Asset Management (India) Pvt Ltd. which is regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India;

• in Israel, HSBC Bank plc (Israel Branch) is regulated by the Bank of Israel. This document is only directed in Israel to qualified investors (under the Investment advice, Investment marketing and Investment portfolio management law-1995) of the Israeli Branch of HBEU for their own use only and is not intended for distribution;
• in Italy and Spain by HSBC Global Asset Management (France), a Portfolio Management Company authorised by the French regulatory authority AMF (no. GP99026) and through the Italian and Spanish branches of HSBC Global Asset Management (France), regulated respectively by Banca d'Italia and Commissione Nazionale per le Società e la Borsa (Consob) in Italy, and the Comisión Nacional del Mercado de Valores (CNMV) in Spain;
• in Mexico by HSBC Global Asset Management (Mexico), SA de CV, Sociedad Operadora de Fondos de Inversión, Grupo Financiero HSBC which is regulated by Comisión Nacional Bancaria y de Valores;
• in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain & Kuwait by HSBC Bank Middle East Limited which are regulated by relevant local Central Banks for the purpose of this promotion and lead regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority.
• in Oman by HSBC Bank Oman S.A.O.G regulated by Central Bank of Oman and Capital Market Authority of Oman;
• in Peru: HSBC Bank USA NA has an authorized representative by the Superintendencia de Banca y Seguros in Perú whereby its activities conform to the General Legal Financial System - Law No. 26702. Funds have not been registered before the Superintendencia del Mercado de Valores (SMV) and are being placed by means of a private offer. SMV has not reviewed the information provided to the investor. This document is for the exclusive use of institutional investors in Perú and is not for public distribution;
• in Singapore by HSBC Global Asset Management (Singapore) Limited, which is regulated by the Monetary Authority of Singapore;
• in Switzerland by HSBC Global Asset Management (Switzerland) AG. This document is intended for professional investor use only. For opting in and opting out according to FinSA, please refer to our website at https://www.assetmanagement.hsbc.ch/ if you wish to change your client categorization, please inform us. HSBC Global Asset Management (Switzerland) AG having its registered office at Gartenstrasse 26, PO Box, CH-8002 Zurich has a licence as an asset manager of collective investment schemes and as a representative of foreign collective investment schemes. Disputes regarding legal claims between the Client and HSBC Global Asset Management (Switzerland) AG can be settled by an ombudsman in mediation proceedings. HSBC Global Asset Management (Switzerland) AG is affiliated to the ombudsman FINOS having its registered address at Talstrasse 20, 8001 Zurich. There are general risks associated with financial instruments, please refer to the Swiss Banking Association ("SBA") Brochure "Risks Involved in Trading in Financial Instruments";
• in Taiwan by HSBC Global Asset Management (Taiwan) Limited which is regulated by the Financial Supervisory Commission R.O.C. (Taiwan);
• in the UK by HSBC Global Asset Management (UK) Limited, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority;
• and in the US by HSBC Global Asset Management (USA) Inc. which is an investment adviser registered with the US Securities and Exchange Commission.

NOT FDIC INSURED ◆ NO BANK GUARANTEE ◆ MAY LOSE VALUE

Copyright © HSBC Global Asset Management Limited 2023. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, on any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of HSBC Global Asset Management Limited.

Docket: DK2300135A Expiry: 12/31/2023