

WorldWatch Headlines: August

Welcome to the latest WorldWatch Headlines. D&B Country Information has detailed analysis, forecasting and commentary on 132 Countries. For an in-depth view, please see the full D&B Country Insight Reports available on all D&B platforms. For more information, visit; www.dnb.co.uk/country-insight

Africa

Algeria	A new policy aims to cut the abuse of import tariffs.
Angola	Uncertainty is very high after the president steps aside.
Botswana	The government's position strengthens as a key opposition party splits.
Cameroon	The IMF approves a new three-year financial support package.
Congo, D.R.	The tense political situation is adding to concerns about provincial insecurity.
Cote d'Ivoire	Growth remains upbeat due to strong trade and investment.
Ethiopia	Industrial parks are being developed across the country with the help of foreign capital.
Gabon	IMF funding will provide crucial fiscal and balance-of-payments support.
Ghana	Industry and agriculture drive improved growth in Q1.
Kenya	Agricultural sector woes subdue economic growth in the first quarter.
Libya	Oil production rebounds but problems remain significant.
Malawi	The World Bank resumes its direct support for Malawi's budget.
Mauritius	Mauritius and India explore new avenues to strengthen bilateral trade and investment.
Morocco	FX reserves dip ahead of an exchange rate reform amid accusations of speculation.
Mozambique	The gas sector is set to receive a major investment boost.
Namibia	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Namibia as fiscal stability improves.
Nigeria	Heightened political instability could be compounded by leadership change.
Senegal	Quarterly growth eases but remains fairly robust.
Sierra Leone	A new financial support package is agreed with the IMF.
South Africa	The benchmark interest rate is cut to stimulate growth.
Sudan	Sudan struggles with elevated consumer price inflation.
Tanzania	Amendments made to mining regulations raise fears of natural resource nationalisation.
Tunisia	The prime minister's anti-corruption campaign could be a game changer for Tunisia.
Uganda	The economy posts robust growth in the first quarter of 2017.
Zambia	The country's copper output rises and could reach a new record high in 2017.
Zimbabwe	An IMF Article IV consultation highlights the short-term challenges facing Zimbabwe.

Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	The Taliban takes a strategically important district.
Australia	The gap between consumer and business expectations widens further.
Bangladesh	Despite the government's ambitious GDP projections, growth is not sustainable.
Cambodia	The outcome of recent local elections suggests that the government is losing support.
China	Private investment growth continues in services and in more advanced downstream manufacturing.
Fiji	Consumption and investment are generating respectable economic growth.
Hong Kong	The visiting Chinese president gives a hardline response to localists and democrats.
India	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for India as the central bank cuts interest rates.
Indonesia	The government steps up efforts to contain extremist groups.
Japan	Japan signs a major free-trade agreement with the EU.
Korea (South)	Export expansion powered by ships and semiconductors continues into Q3.
Malaysia	Strong export growth bodes well for economic performance in 2017.

This update features extracts from D&B's range of Country Insight Services. For more information contact your local D&B office or email countryinsight@dnb.com

Myanmar	The economy cooled in 2016/17 amid slowing investment and flood-linked inflation.
Nepal	The first local elections in two decades go ahead.
New Zealand	The export-driven downturn limits Q1 GDP, but effects will likely be temporary.
Pakistan	Increased political uncertainty could undermine FDI prospects.
Papua New Guinea	Prime Minister Peter O'Neill is re-elected but the overall election result is unclear.
Philippines	The country is reported to be among the most at risk from climate change.
Singapore	Technical recession is narrowly avoided in Q2.
Sri Lanka	The EU reopens privileged access for Sri Lankan exporters after seven years.
Taiwan	Taiwan's investment, export and GDP growth should peak as the business cycle matures in 2017.
Thailand	The government implements an unexpectedly stringent labour law.
Vietnam	Growth accelerates in Q2 as drought impact fades.

Eastern Europe

Albania	Parliamentary elections produce a strong government.
Azerbaijan	The International Bank of Azerbaijan's debt restructuring plans fuel concerns about rising sovereign debt.
Belarus	The main interest rate is cut amid a continuing decline in consumer price inflation.
Bosnia & Herzegovina	The economy will expand in 2017 and 2018, primarily driven by rising exports.
Bulgaria	The current account will continue to shrink as imports and oil prices increase.
Croatia	The tense relationship with Slovenia takes a turn for the worse.
Czech Republic	A chronic labour shortage forces employers to increase wages.
Estonia	Estonia heads the EU Council at a crucial time for the Union.
Georgia	A former Georgian president faces possible extradition from Ukraine to Georgia.
Hungary	Deteriorating relations with the EU could threaten inflows of funds.
Kazakhstan	The authorities approve legal amendments that would effectively ban political opposition.
Kyrgyz Republic	Strong growth in the mining sector boosts the economy.
Latvia	Negotiations are ongoing regarding the pending tax reform.
Lithuania	Russia extends its counter sanctions against the EU, negatively affecting Lithuania.
Macedonia	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Macedonia's country risk rating as the political environment improves.
Poland	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Poland's country risk rating due to ongoing political problems.
Romania	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Romania's country risk rating as the political environment deteriorates.
Russian Federation	The US approves legislation to extend sanctions on Russia.
Serbia	Serbia is experiencing a wave of industrial strikes.
Slovak Republic	Consumption and investment will drive robust growth.
Slovenia	A ruling on the Bay of Piran angers Croatia, risking retaliation.
Tajikistan	External debt rises as the currency continues to weaken.
Turkmenistan	Weakening fiscal finances force the likely phasing-out of free utilities.
Ukraine	Ryanair cancels plans to begin flying to destinations in Ukraine.
Uzbekistan	The central bank votes for an unusually sharp increase in the refinancing rate.

This update features extracts from D&B's range of Country Insight Services. For more information contact your local D&B office or email countryinsight@dnb.com

Middle East

Bahrain	Bahrain joins the blockade of Qatar and will suffer a hit to its trade as a result.
Egypt	The IMF disburses funds despite the government's missed targets.
Iran	US pressure on Iran continues to ratchet up.
Iraq	The risk outlook improves, with Mosul almost fully liberated from Islamic State.
Israel	Tensions with the Palestinians and with Israeli Arabs show no sign of receding.
Jordan	Growth remains anaemic in Q1 amid weak internal and external demand.
Kuwait	Kuwait's internationally-backed mediation efforts continue regarding the Qatar crisis.
Lebanon	Five suicide attacks highlight Lebanon's vulnerability to the overspill from the Syrian civil war.
Oman	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Oman's country risk rating amid weak economic fundamentals and rising political risk.
Qatar	International support grows for Qatar in its dispute with Saudi Arabia and its allies.
Saudi Arabia	Growth contracts as oil sector output falls.
Syria	The domestic market continues to weaken.
UAE	Although growth surprises on the upside, real GDP data for 2016 is the weakest since 2009.
Yemen	The UN warns of complete social, economic and institutional collapse in Yemen.

The Americas

Argentina	Economic activity accelerates amid impressive growth in industrial production.
Bolivia	A boundary committee with Chile is reactivated to help restore co-operation.
Brazil	Michel Temer becomes the first sitting Brazilian president to face criminal charges.
Canada	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Canada's country risk rating as economic fundamentals improve strongly.
Chile	The government acts to calm insecurity in the south via a range of policy measures.
Colombia	The disarmament process is concluded, but former FARC rebels remain imprisoned.
Costa Rica	The medium-term currency risk is highlighted through interventions by the central bank.
Cuba	The US partially reverses its rapprochement with Cuba.
Dominican Republic	Senior officials are arrested as part of the Odebrecht corruption investigation.
Ecuador	Inflation is stable but will increase amid higher international oil prices.
El Salvador	An agreement on pension reform remains elusive as the political stalemate continues.
Guatemala	The Constitutional Court's suspension of a gold mine deals another setback to the mining sector.
Honduras	Improved domestic and external demand conditions will support strong economic momentum.
Jamaica	The goods sector underpins economic growth but increased hurricane activity could be a threat.
Mexico	The central bank tightens monetary policy as robust inflation persists.
Nicaragua	The government has set up a state mining company, signalling its intention to strengthen the industry.
Panama	The business environment looks more promising as compliance with international tax standards improves.
Paraguay	Positive supply shocks and firmer spending will maintain the economic growth momentum.
Peru	The growth momentum will gradually strengthen.
Trinidad & Tobago	Higher hydrocarbon prices are still insufficient to substantially power the country's economic metrics.
USA	Near-term growth is downgraded as proprietary leading indicators signal headwinds.
Uruguay	The government is struggling on multiple fronts.
Venezuela	The constituent assembly vote will go ahead, despite widespread condemnation.

This update features extracts from D&B's range of Country Insight Services. For more information contact your local D&B office or email countryinsight@dnb.com

Western Europe

Austria	Recent polls indicate that the October election will lead to political change.
Belgium	The government resumes discussions about overhauling corporate tax.
Cyprus	The economy is likely to have expanded further in Q2.
Denmark	Credit supply is growing, boosted by low interest rates.
Finland	A party split cuts the coalition's majority and heightens the risk of early elections.
France	The economic outlook brightens as political risk falls.
Germany	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Germany's country risk rating amid multiple positive developments.
Greece	The economy is likely to have expanded further in Q2 but downside risks remain.
Iceland	Quarterly growth slows as business investment and exports both decline.
Ireland	The economic outlook improves further amid falling unemployment and low inflation.
Italy	Indicators give mixed signals, but further growth appears likely in Q2.
Luxembourg	Economic growth slows but optimism about prospects persists.
Malta	Quarterly growth is likely to have continued, but downside risks remain.
Netherlands	Political uncertainty persists as coalition talks are put on hold.
Norway	The economy thrives despite low oil prices.
Portugal	The government is boosted further by the lifting of the Excessive Deficit Procedure.
Spain	Key indicators hint at strong Q2 growth.
Sweden	The government improves the business environment for banks and smaller start-ups.
Switzerland	Credit risk worsens as business failures spike.
Turkey	Political and security risks remain elevated a year after the failed coup.
United Kingdom	Political uncertainty remains high amid anaemic growth.

This update features extracts from D&B's range of Country Insight Services. For more information contact your local D&B office or email countryinsight@dnb.com