

WorldWatch Headlines: December

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Africa

Algeria	President Bouteflika is set to run for a fifth term in office.
Angola	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Angola due to the implementation of new customs' tariffs.
Botswana	Robert Mugabe's removal as Zimbabwe's president is a huge boon for Botswana.
Cameroon	Large infrastructure projects drive economic growth.
Congo, D.R.	Inflation accelerates due to currency weakness and high import costs.
Cote d'Ivoire	The economy is growing rapidly due to infrastructure development and agriculture.
Ethiopia	The central bank devalues the local currency exchange rate.
Gabon	Gabon is set to receive a second IMF disbursement.
Ghana	The government targets a major improvement in the fiscal deficit.
Kenya	President Kenyatta wins the election re-run but further political instability lies ahead.
Libya	Islamic State is involved in a number of illegal business activities.
Malawi	Plans are made with the IMF for a second extended credit facility.
Mauritius	The benchmark interest rate is cut and support offered to the export sector.
Morocco	The king orders a cabinet shake-out on account of the El-Hoceima protests.
Mozambique	The government pursues its anti-corruption drive.
Namibia	Policy continuity is expected to minimise political risk.
Nigeria	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Nigeria as it emerges from recession.
Senegal	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades Senegal's country risk rating due to favourable macroeconomic indicators.
Sierra Leone	Aid to the country will increase in response to an enormous landslide.
South Africa	The key interest rate is kept unchanged amid concerns over inflation and exchange rates.
Sudan	The removal of US sanctions paves the way for more Western trade and investment.
Tanzania	The Tanzanian economy is expected to be one of the fastest growing in Africa.
Tunisia	The authorities are set to change laws regulating the FX market.
Uganda	Private sector credit growth remains muted.
Zambia	The authorities revise down mining output projections for 2017.
Zimbabwe	The army intervenes to remove President Mugabe from power.

Asia Pacific

Afghanistan	A significant increase in opium production underlines policy failures.
Australia	The banking royal commission could lead to stricter regulation.
Bangladesh	The supply environment outlook deteriorates.
Cambodia	The government's abusive politics could trigger international sanctions.
China	President Xi's elevation comes amid serious environmental and governance challenges.
Fiji	The economy will grow respectably over the forecast period.
Hong Kong	Hong Kong signs a vital free-trade agreement with ASEAN.
India	The tentative economic stabilisation is boosted by a sovereign rating upgrade.
Indonesia	The growth forecast for 2017 is downgraded.
Japan	The economy records the longest growth run in more than fifteen years.
Korea (South)	Exports and investment underpinned faster growth in Q3.
Malaysia	The economy surprises on the upside as domestic demand boosts growth.

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Myanmar	The crisis in Rakhine State provokes an international outcry.
Nepal	Forthcoming elections could see a lurch to the political left.
New Zealand	Labor's election win ends the National Party's decade in power.
Pakistan	The government imposes new tariffs to curb imports.
Papua New Guinea	The IMF highlights the economic challenges facing the government.
Philippines	Economic growth is boosted by public sector consumption and investment.
Singapore	The authorities prepare to enact higher taxes and broaden the tax base.
Sri Lanka	Business confidence slumps amid weak data and corruption concerns.
Taiwan	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Taiwan amid strong export and GDP performance.
Thailand	Third-quarter economic performance is significantly better than expected.
Vietnam	The country will benefit from the successor to the TPP agreement.

Eastern Europe

Albania	Strong investment boosts economic growth.
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan's competitiveness continues to improve, but substantial challenges persist.
Belarus	The government would like to open new partnerships with the West.
Bosnia & Herzegovina	The EU extends the mandate of its peacekeepers as political tensions rise.
Bulgaria	The economy is set to lose steam as consumption decreases.
Croatia	The economy is growing robustly.
Czech Republic	Growth in consumption, investment and exports drives strong economic expansion.
Estonia	The country is confirmed as an easy place to set up and run a business.
Georgia	Real GDP will marginally decelerate in 2018.
Hungary	The quality of the commercial environment is in relative decline.
Kazakhstan	The lower house of parliament approves a new tax code.
Kyrgyz Republic	The orderly transfer of presidential power is remarkable.
Latvia	The economy grows surprisingly strongly in Q3.
Lithuania	Lithuania's business environment ranking improves compared to last year.
Macedonia	The economy will enjoy moderate growth in 2018 and 2019.
Poland	A European court ruling on migrants makes a case against Poland inevitable.
Romania	The government makes controversial changes to the fiscal code.
Russian Federation	Vladimir Putin looks set to win 2018's presidential election.
Serbia	Economic growth is accelerating from a low base.
Slovak Republic	Local elections result in a setback for the Smer-SD party.
Slovenia	It looks as if Slovenia might abandon its liberal political consensus.
Tajikistan	Eurobond proceeds will help to finance the completion of the Rogun power plant.
Turkmenistan	The IMF stresses the challenges still facing the authorities.
Ukraine	Parliament passes legislation to overhaul the ailing healthcare system.
Uzbekistan	Economic growth remains strong but has been decelerating.

Middle East

Bahrain	Despite oil production cuts, Q2 economic growth is reasonably strong.
Egypt	An IMF review should trigger the release of funds.
Iran	The political risk environment deteriorates significantly.
Iraq	Iraq takes back control of disputed territories after a Kurdish independence referendum.

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Israel	Growth stabilises in Q3, aided by exports, private consumption and government spending.
Jordan	The government may reduce bread subsidies.
Kuwait	The government resigns to stall parliamentary opposition to fiscal austerity.
Lebanon	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Lebanon's country risk rating due to uncertainty over the prime minister's position.
Oman	Oman seeks to reduce its reliance on Saudi food imports.
Qatar	Labour complaints are dropped after Qatar tries to improve workers' rights.
Saudi Arabia	The political environment deteriorates as the Crown Prince launches a power grab.
Syria	Dun & Bradstreet upgrades its rating outlook for Syria as the military situation stabilises.
UAE	Abu Dhabi experiences slowing growth.
Yemen	The killing of ex-President Saleh is unlikely to bring peace any closer.

The Americas

Argentina	The government pushes forward with pro-market reforms to drive growth.
Bolivia	Relatively strong growth will persist amid continued public investment.
Brazil	The growth forecast is nudged up as economic activity gathers pace.
Canada	The strong currency is a limiting factor as growth slows.
Chile	The presidential election is closer than expected and goes to a second round.
Colombia	Congress approves an austerity budget.
Costa Rica	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades Costa Rica's country risk rating due to concerns over public sector probity.
Cuba	Cuban entities are blacklisted under a tightening of the US travel ban.
Dominican Republic	Hurricanes leave five dead and damage the agricultural sector.
Ecuador	The leadership of the ruling party is in doubt after the attempted ouster of President Moreno.
El Salvador	The security situation is showing signs of deterioration.
Guatemala	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Guatemala as a new political crisis unfolds.
Honduras	Election transparency concerns cloud the political outlook.
Jamaica	Growth declines marginally in Q2.
Mexico	September's earthquakes prompt a contraction in Q3 real GDP.
Nicaragua	The ruling FSLN comfortably but controversially wins the municipal elections.
Panama	The trade dispute with Colombia takes a turn for the worse.
Paraguay	A roundtable is established to tackle insecurity following the EPP kidnappings.
Peru	New evidence in the Odebrecht scandal puts more strain on political stability.
Trinidad & Tobago	Despite an uptick in energy output, real GDP contracts again in 2017.
USA	Further details of tax reforms are needed to fully evaluate their economic impact.
Uruguay	The government signs a major pulp mill deal, heralding a huge investment boost.
Venezuela	A default looms as US sanctions hinder restructuring efforts.

Western Europe

Austria	The coalition government is likely to be formed by mid-December.
Belgium	Domestic demand continues to be the main GDP growth pillar in 2018.
Cyprus	Real GDP expands at its fastest rate in almost nine years.
Denmark	Estimates suggest that economic growth slowed in Q3.
Finland	Finland is ranked very favourably in terms of its business environment.
France	Growth accelerates and forward-looking indicators are sound.
Germany	The collapse of coalition talks increases political risk.
Greece	Key economic indicators hint at further growth in Q3.

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Iceland	Coalition government developments suggest a shift to the centre-left.
Ireland	The macroeconomic environment is set to improve further.
Italy	Preliminary estimates point to more economic expansion in Q3.
Luxembourg	International trade drives Luxembourg's economic growth.
Malta	Key economic indicators hint at further GDP growth in Q3.
Netherlands	The economy records its 14th consecutive quarter of growth.
Norway	The mainland economy continued growing in Q3 and unemployment decreased further.
Portugal	The government sees off a no-confidence motion.
Spain	The outlook is still improving amid positive economic developments.
Sweden	Low inflation sends the krona tumbling.
Switzerland	The number of business failures is still rising.
Turkey	Dun & Bradstreet downgrades its rating outlook for Turkey as the lira hits a record low.
United Kingdom	The government cuts growth forecasts and injects a small fiscal stimulus.

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