

REFLECTIONS ON GREECE AND GLOBAL MACRO

Jeremy Schwartz — Global Chief Investment Officer

07/01/2015

Last week I spoke with Alex Gurevich, the former head of global macro trading at JPMorgan Chase. We chatted about his views on trading in the global macro landscape, in particular Europe, Japan, emerging markets and the United States. He labels his investment style as one that is long term in nature and regards patience as a virtue when considering investment opportunities. Note: Our conversation occurred before Greece, which still had not come to terms with its creditors, closed its banking system for a week, causing a sell-off in European stocks on Monday and putting more pressure on sentiment. I checked back with him to update his views following the weekend's major news. **Economy vs.**

Market Impact of Greece? From an economic standpoint, the Greek economy represents only about 2% of the [eurozone GDP](#), so Gurevich believes whether Greece muddles through or exits, the long-term economic impact should be moderate. The more important question now is whether this will lead to a market panic. **Gurevich wrote the**

following this weekend: *Paradoxically, it is easier to describe what would happen to the markets in the aftermath of a completely unanticipated and destructive event such as 9/11. We would expect a sharp equities sell-off, a flight to U.S. Treasuries and to defensive currencies such as the dollar, Swiss franc and yen. The reason is that if market players are not positioned for this particular event, it is easy to guess what they would do. But when an event was in the making for five years, the prediction is much harder. If we assume that most speculative money was already positioned defensively with respect to Greece, any resolution may come as a relief. But let's go to the next level. If the speculators anticipate the post-resolution relief rally in Greek bonds and stocks, they may actually not be positioned defensively.* **Global**

Monetary Policy Implications Gurevich believes that global [monetary policy](#) is a critical component of currency ([FX](#)) valuations. While the euro depreciated strongly in 2014 (approximately -12%) and started to do so again in early 2015, it has more recently corrected and has appreciated from its low. Gurevich believes that the longer-term trend for euro weakness is very much intact, although he believes the brief correction could continue for several more months without harming the long-term trend for more weakness. The weakness in the euro and yen is primarily becoming a strong U.S. dollar story. Gurevich foresees the euro's strength today as temporary and believes it can resume weakness when short-term [interest rates](#) start to rise in the U.S. The crux of FX valuation is interest rate differentials. With the European Central Bank on track to continue [quantitative easing \(QE\)](#), pushing local European rates lower, a Federal Reserve (Fed) liftoff as early as September this year could push rates in the U.S. higher, leading to simultaneous U.S. dollar strength and euro weakness. The Japanese yen has retained its depreciating trend over the past 2.5 years. Its currency direction today is also a function of currencies in the Asia bloc, namely China and South Korea. In the event of more yen weakness, it would be interesting to watch the reaction functions of the People's Bank of China and the Bank of Korea. Currency valuations play a large role in export-oriented economies. **U.S. Interest Rate Outlook** Gurevich is [bullish](#) on bonds in the U.S.

Thus far, he views the steepening sell-off as temporary and expects that it will correct once the Fed starts tightening its policy. Without tightening, investors are able to reap a 2.5% yield in the long end, while paying close to 0% to fund their costs in the short term—an unbalanced risk/reward profile. The curve may eventually flatten, with a big rally in long-end bonds. **U.S. Equity Outlook** While the U.S. market has outlived its historical six-year average bull markets, Gurevich does not think that [valuations](#) look egregious. He follows both the Information Technology and Financial sectors closely and has favored Financials for the last several years given that the litigation and regulation risk premiums have been abnormally high. Technology is one he watches closely for its growth potential in an environment of rising rates. In assessing the turning point for equities as rates rise, the Utilities sector has tended to lead the pack. In other words, the more bond-like sectors have tended to lead the markets, and Gurevich is cautious with these particular sectors as rising rates gain momentum. **China Outlook** Gurevich finds it difficult to relate to staunch China bulls and is skeptical about the capability of any government to successfully engineer reforms in a manner that is not disruptive to markets. Chinese financials, despite low valuations, are difficult to fully assess given the potential for accounting manipulations and the Chinese government's ability to transfer infinite wealth from its citizens to corporations via the state-owned enterprise

structure. Additionally, credit growth in China is in uncharted territory, with total volume of credit growth 3x that of 2007 at \$28 trillion; for perspective, that is larger than total credit in the U.S. After this weekend's additional monetary actions—a fourth cut in interest rates as well as a drop in the required reserves of banks to inject more money into the system—Gurevich believes there might be more problems in China than it looks like from the outside. Gurevich believes positioning for yuan currency weakness is a worthwhile trade, as its risk/reward is disproportionately positive. However, it is not a certainty given that China is looking to be included in the International Monetary Fund's special drawing rights (SDR) this November, and political forces globally, namely the U.S., do not favor Chinese currency devaluation. *Read the Conversations with Professor Siegel Series [here](#).*

Important Risks Related to this Article

Foreign investing involves special risks, such as risk of loss from currency fluctuation or political or economic uncertainty. Investments in currency involve additional special risks, such as credit risk and interest rate fluctuations. Investments focused in China increase the impact of events and developments associated with the region, which can adversely affect performance.

For standardized performance and the most recent month-end performance click [here](#) NOTE, this material is intended for electronic use only. Individuals who intend to print and physically deliver to an investor must print the monthly performance report to accompany this blog.

For more investing insights, check out our [Economic & Market Outlook](#)

View the online version of this article [here](#).

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

U.S. investors only: Click [here](#) to obtain a WisdomTree ETF prospectus which contains investment objectives, risks, charges, expenses, and other information; read and consider carefully before investing.

There are risks involved with investing, including possible loss of principal. Foreign investing involves currency, political and economic risk. Funds focusing on a single country, sector and/or funds that emphasize investments in smaller companies may experience greater price volatility. Investments in emerging markets, currency, fixed income and alternative investments include additional risks. Please see prospectus for discussion of risks.

Past performance is not indicative of future results. This material contains the opinions of the author, which are subject to change, and should not to be considered or interpreted as a recommendation to participate in any particular trading strategy, or deemed to be an offer or sale of any investment product and it should not be relied on as such. There is no guarantee that any strategies discussed will work under all market conditions. This material represents an assessment of the market environment at a specific time and is not intended to be a forecast of future events or a guarantee of future results. This material should not be relied upon as research or investment advice regarding any security in particular. The user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of the information provided herein. Neither WisdomTree nor its affiliates, nor Foreside Fund Services, LLC, or its affiliates provide tax or legal advice. Investors seeking tax or legal advice should consult their tax or legal advisor. Unless expressly stated otherwise the opinions, interpretations or findings expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of WisdomTree or any of its affiliates.

The MSCI information may only be used for your internal use, may not be reproduced or re-disseminated in any form and may not be used as a basis for or component of any financial instruments or products or indexes. None of the MSCI information is intended to constitute investment advice or a recommendation to make (or refrain from making) any kind of investment decision and may not be relied on as such. Historical data and analysis should not be taken as an indication or guarantee of any future performance analysis, forecast or prediction. The MSCI information is provided on an "as is" basis and the user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of this information. MSCI, each of its affiliates and each entity involved in compiling, computing or creating any MSCI information (collectively, the "MSCI Parties") expressly disclaims all warranties. With respect to this information, in no event shall any MSCI Party have any liability for any direct, indirect, special, incidental, punitive, consequential (including loss profits) or any other damages (www.msci.com)

Jonathan Steinberg, Jeremy Schwartz, Rick Harper, Christopher Gannatti, Bradley Krom, Tripp Zimmerman, Michael Barrer, Anita Rausch, Kevin Flanagan, Brendan Loftus, Joseph Tenaglia, Jeff Weniger, Matt Wagner, Alejandro Saltiel, Ryan Krystopowicz, Jianing Wu, and Brian Manby are registered representatives of Foreside Fund Services, LLC.

WisdomTree Funds are distributed by Foreside Fund Services, LLC, in the U.S. only.

You cannot invest directly in an index.

DEFINITIONS

Eurozone (EZ) : Consists of the following 18 countries that have adopted the euro as their currency: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain (source: European Central Bank, 2014).

Gross domestic product (GDP) : The sum total of all goods and services produced across an economy.

Monetary easing policies : Actions undertaken by a central bank with the ultimate desired effect of lowering interest rates and stimulating the economy.

Foreign Exchange (FOREX, FX) : The exchange of one currency for another, or the conversion of one currency into another currency.

Interest rates : The rate at which interest is paid by a borrower for the use of money.

Quantitative Easing (QE) : A government monetary policy occasionally used to increase the money supply by buying government securities or other securities from the market. Quantitative easing increases the money supply by flooding financial institutions with capital, in an effort to promote increased lending and liquidity.

Bullish : a position that benefits when asset prices rise.

Valuation : Refers to metrics that relate financial statistics for equities to their price levels to determine if certain attributes, such as earnings or dividends, are cheap or expensive.