



Souring trade sentiment could sink the manufacturing ISM

- Over the last six months, the US manufacturing ISM has outperformed the PMIs from Europe, China, Canada and Mexico – the largest trading partners of the US. These series had generally been rising in tandem through much of 2017 but began to diverge in 2018.
- As we have repeatedly cautioned, any potential negative fallout from the latest escalation of trade tensions is likely to first show up in the PMIs, which have traditionally been leading indicators of capital spending. Within the manufacturing ISM, arguably the most widely-followed sentiment indicator, market participants should pay close attention to the new export orders series, which has led the headline ISM by five months in recent years.
- With the exception of Canada, since the beginning of 2018, the new export components of the manufacturing PMIs have declined meaningfully more than the headline series. This suggests that the escalation of trade frictions is an important factor weighing on global manufacturing sentiment and one that the US may not remain immune to for much longer.

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Figure 1: The new export orders index has led the headline manufacturing ISM by five months over the last several years



Source : ISM, Haver Analytics & Deutsche Bank



Exports sentiment poses downside risk to the manufacturing ISM

As we have argued previously, any potential negative fallout from the latest escalation of trade tensions is likely to first show up in the PMIs, which have traditionally been leading indicators of overall economic activity. This point was recently highlighted by NY Fed President Williams and, indeed, the US and global PMIs are important components of our momentum index for the US economy (see "[Taking the pulse of the US economy: A view from our DB momentum index](#)"). One important measure to focus on within these series is the component for new export orders, which in the US has led the headline ISM manufacturing index by five months in recent years (Figure 2). More ominously, as Figure 3 illustrates, the manufacturing ISM export orders series has led real equipment spending by three quarters in the current business cycle.

Figure 2: The new export orders index has led the headline manufacturing ISM by five months over the last several years



Source : ISM, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

Figure 3: The new export orders index has been a leading indicator of capex



Source : ISM, BEA, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

Over the last six months, the US manufacturing ISM has outperformed the PMIs from Europe, China, Canada and Mexico – the largest trading partners of the US. As we illustrate in Figures 4 & 5, the 3-month average for the US manufacturing ISM was roughly 5.4 points above the Chinese PMI and 3.8 points above the Euro Area PMI as of the latest data for April. The US has also outperformed Canada and Mexico by roughly 3.2 points each. One potential reason for the US outperformance of late was tax reform and fiscal stimulus measures in 2018. However, as the boost from fiscal stimulus fades, a key question will be whether the US can continue to outperform its major trading partners, especially if trade frictions continue to escalate.

Figure 4: The mfg ISM has notably outperformed the EU & Chinese PMIs



Source : IHSM, CXN, ISM, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

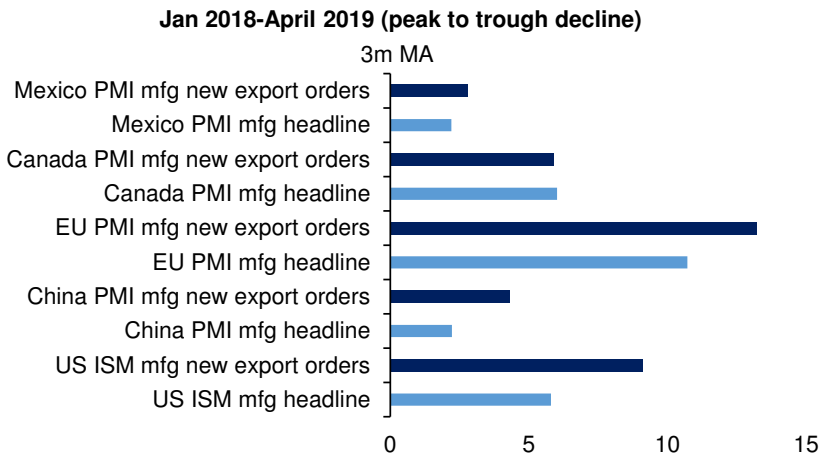
Within the aforementioned PMIs, the new export orders components have been particularly weak of late. As we can see in Figures 6 & 7, the three-month averages for the new export orders components of these surveys began to deteriorate meaningfully around the beginning of 2018.

In Figure 8 we calculate the peak to trough declines in the three-month averages for the headline and new export orders components of the PMI data for the aforementioned countries since the beginning of 2018. With the exception of Canada, new export orders have declined more than the headlines. To be sure, the new export



orders series within these surveys are not captured in the headline PMIs, which are weighted averages of new orders, output, employment, supplier delivery times and inventories. However, the new orders components of these surveys, which are an input into the headline series, are generally highly correlated with new export orders, the one exception being Mexico.

Figure 8: Aside from Canada, the new export orders series have declined notably more than the headline PMIs



Source : ISM, CXN, RBC, IHSM, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

In summary, our base case for some time has been that the US would raise the tariff rate on \$200 billion of Chinese goods to 25%, from 10%. As we noted in our outlook from last August, we expected this to subtract roughly a tenth from real GDP growth this year (see "[US outlook bends but doesn't break as trade stakes rise](#)"). To date, the US has imposed tariffs on \$282 billion of US imports (2017 import values), to which various US trading partners have responded with retaliatory actions covering roughly \$130 billion of US exports (Figures 9 & 10). The latest threats from the US to place 25% tariffs on the remaining \$300 billion of Chinese imports not already subject to tariffs could result in a roughly 0.4 percentage point drag on growth, with the impact potentially even more severe depending on the response of financial conditions and consumer and business sentiment (see "[If Crosscurrents Strengthen, How far Could Global Growth Fall](#)"). In our view, the first order impact on the US economic data will likely be seen in business sentiment. Without the buffer of fiscal stimulus, the outperformance of the US manufacturing ISM is unlikely to last much longer. If trade uncertainties persist, over time, the drag on growth from trade frictions would likely manifest itself in diminished capital investment and lower overall economic output, posing a material risk to what is now the longest US expansion in the post- WWII period.

Figure 5: The mfg ISM has also outperformed Canadian and Mexican PMIs



Source : ISM, RBC, IHSM, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

Figure 6: The US new exports orders component remains higher than that of the EU and China



Source : IHSM, CXN, ISM, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

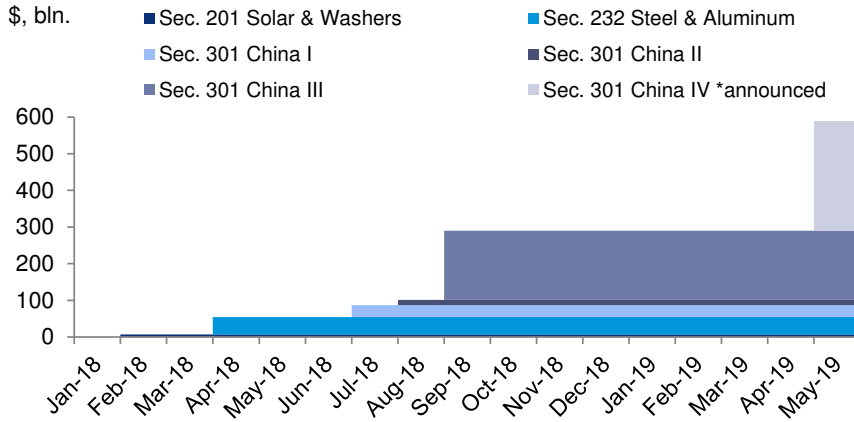
Figure 7: The ISM export series is closer to those of its main trading partners



Source : ISM, RBC, IHSM, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

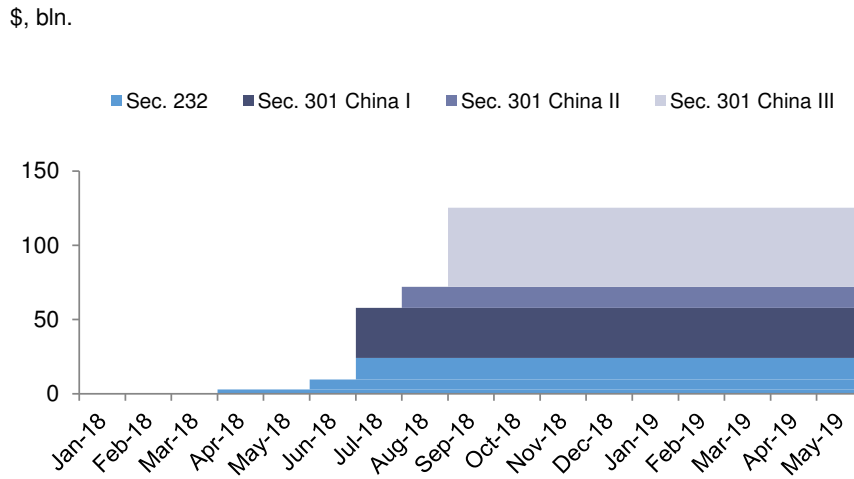


Figure 9: The US has placed tariffs on roughly \$280 bn of imports and threatened tariffs on another \$300 bn (2017 import values)



Source : Congressional Research Services & Deutsche Bank

Figure 10: Foreign trading partners have retaliated with tariffs on roughly \$130 bn of US exports (2017 export values)



Source : Congressional Research Services & Deutsche Bank

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Appendix 1

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