Commentary

Fixed Income

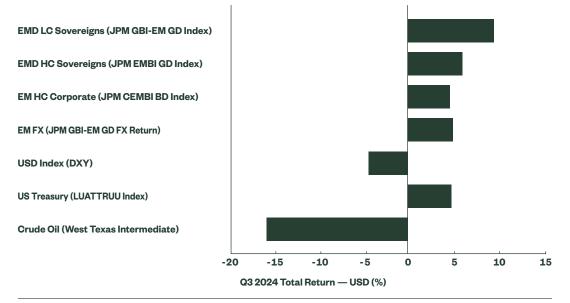
Emerging Market Debt

Market Commentary: Q3 2024

Chart of the Month: Strong Tailwinds in Q3 Underpinned EM Debt Returns The global macro and risk backdrop was increasingly favorable for emerging market debt as the third quarter progressed. A combination of market expectations and the actual outcome of the US Federal Reserve's September meeting, when it cut interest rates, weighed on the US dollar and US Treasury yields. This provided a strong tailwind for the performance of EM debt in the quarter.

Figure 1

EM Debt Rallies in Q3 2024



Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P., JP Morgan, as of 30 September 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable.

EMD Commentary: Q3 2024

Emerging market (EM) debt began the quarter in positive fashion, benefiting from a softer US inflation print and market expectations that the US Fed was increasingly likely to start lowering interest rates from September. However, there were bouts of uncertainty early in Q3 around the future trajectory of EM core rates, with markets factoring in US election outcome possibilities and the prevailing geopolitical risks. While markets welcomed the reopening of Israel-Hamas talks in July, the situation remained very fragile and escalated further towards quarter-end. The EM risk backdrop improved as the quarter progressed, with a dovish tone in messaging from Fed Chair Jerome Powell in August and subsequent data releases supported the likelihood of a soft landing in the US. As widely expected, the Fed commenced policy easing in September with the delivery of a 50 basis points (bps) rate cut to take the federal funds target rate range to 4.75%–5.00%. The bigger-than-expected policy rate cut surprised markets and added to improving prospects for EM debt. Total returns were positive in Q3 for both EM local currency and hard currency bonds. The US dollar weakness combined with a drop in EM local yields supported EM local bond performance. EM hard currency debt benefited from a decline in US benchmark Treasury yields and a notable narrowing of spreads.

The broad EM inflation outlook improved in Q3, aided by a decline in commodity prices — crude oil was particularly weak, recording a 16.4% fall in the three months. Some of the major EM central banks continued to lower their policy rates in Q3, although Brazil was a notable exception. The Central Bank of Brazil raised its Selic rate by 25bps to 10.75% in September to address inflation, labour market pressures, and positive output gap. In China, economic data surprises in Q3 were well below their long-term average. Deflationary pressures remained, with producer prices falling at a faster rate while consumer inflation proved weaker than expected. The low interest rate regime persisted, with yields sliding to new lows. The People's Bank of China (PBoC) lowered its key lending rates by 10bps to record lows in July — the one-year loan prime rate and the five-year rate were cut to 3.35% and 3.85%, respectively. In September, the PBoC announced a series of stimulus measures, which include reductions in its key interest rates and banks' reserve requirement ratio (RRR), a CNY 500 billion swap facility that provides funding for non-financial institutions to purchase equities, with another CNY 300 billion made available to commercial banks to make low-cost loans companies.

Net flows in the quarter for hard currency and local currency funds amounted to -\$1.7bn and -\$1.4bn, respectively (source: JP Morgan).

Figure 2
Emerging Market Debt
Index Returns — As of
30 September, 2024

	1m (%)	3m (%)	6m (%)	YTD (%)	12m (%)	3yrs (%)	5yrs (%)
In USD							
GBI-EM GD (EM Local Currency)	3.39	8.99	7.21	4.95	13.42	0.60	0.59
EMBI GD (EM Hard Currency)	1.85	6.15	6.48	8.64	18.60	-0.40	0.87
CEMBI BD (EM Corporates)	1.23	4.48	6.04	8.50	14.49	1.06	2.79
In EUR							
GBI-EM GD (EM Local Currency)	2.55	4.67	3.75	3.87	7.60	1.87	0.12
EMBI GD (EM Hard Currency)	1.01	1.94	3.04	7.53	12.51	0.86	0.40
CEMBI BD (EM Corporates)	0.40	0.33	2.62	7.39	8.61	2.34	2.31
In GBP							
GBI-EM GD (EM Local Currency)	1.31	2.72	0.97	-0.26	3.20	0.77	-1.10
EMBI GD (EM Hard Currency)	-0.21	0.04	0.28	3.25	7.92	-0.23	-0.83
CEMBI BD (EM Corporates)	-0.82	-1.54	-0.13	3.12	4.18	1.23	1.06

Sources: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. Performance returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized.

Figure 3
ESG Emerging Market Debt
Index Returns — As of
30 September, 2024

	1m (%)	3m (%)	6m (%)	YTD (%)	12m (%)	3yrs (%)	5yrs (%)
In USD							
JESG GBI-EM (ESG EM Local Currency)	3.35	9.12	7.36	4.98	14.02	0.90	0.85
JESG EMBI (ESG EM Hard Currency)	1.75	6.37	6.73	8.36	18.13	-1.18	0.46

Sources: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. Performance returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized.

Figure 4

Key EM and Macro Levels

As of 30 September 2024

Item	Δ 1 Month	Δ 3 Months	ΔYTD	Current Level
GBI-EM GD Yield	-15 bps	-49 bps	-8 bps	6.11%
EMBI GD Yield	-40 bps	-92 bps	-36 bps	7.49%
EMBI GD Spread	-27 bps	-30 bps	-23 bps	361 bps
CEMBI BD Yield	-20 bps	-71 bps	-68 bps	6.33%
CEMBI BD Spread	-6 bps	2 bps	-46 bps	303 bps
CDX.EM 5y	1 bps	-12 bps	-3 bps	163 bps
10y UST	-12 bps	-62 bps	-10 bps	3.78%
Dollar Index (DXY)	-0.90%	-4.81%	-0.55%	_
DOW 30	1.85%	8.21%	12.31%	42330
Oil (WTI)	-7.31%	-16.40%	-4.86%	\$ 68.17

Source: JP Morgan, Bloomberg as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable.

Local Currency Market Highlights

EM local currency debt returned 8.99% (in USD terms) in Q3 2024, as measured by the JP Morgan GBI-EM Global Diversified Index. A major contribution to the total return outcome came from sizeable foreign exchange (FX) returns (+4.87%) — 14 out of the 19 currencies in the index delivered positive FX returns. EM local bonds gained substantially on the back of the aforementioned weakness of the US dollar. Nearly all countries contributed positively to the index, except Mexico, Colombia and Uruguay. The prospect of monetary policy convergence between EM central banks and the US Fed supported bond performance. Total bond return was positive (+4.12%), with the GBI-EM GD Index yield decreasing 49bps in Q3.

Figure 5
Key Return Drivers of
EM Local Government
Bond Markets

GBI-EM GD (EM Local Currency)	Monthly Return (%)	3 Month Return (%)	YTD Return (%)
In USD			
Total Return (in \$)	3.39	8.99	4.95
FX Return (vs \$)	2.03	4.87	-0.77
Price Return (Local Currency)	0.92	2.72	1.56
Interest Return (Local Currency)	0.44	1.40	4.15
In EUR			
Total Return (in €)	2.55	4.67	3.87
FX Return (vs €)	1.19	0.55	-1.84
In GBP			
Total Return (in £)	1.31	2.72	-0.26
FX Return (vs £)	-0.06	-1.40	-5.97

Sources: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. Performance returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized.

Figure 6

Best and Worst Performers

Across EM Local

Government Bond

Markets in USD*

Q3 24	Country	Total Return USD (%)	Bond Return (%)	FX Return (%)	Index Weight (%)	Index Impact (bps)**
GBI-EM GD		8.99	4.12	4.87		
Top 5	South Africa	17.2	10.6	6.6	8.6	149
Performers	Thailand	16.3	2.3	14.0	9.6	156
	Malaysia	16.3	1.6	14.6	10.0	163
	Chile	13.4	7.9	5.5	1.8	25
	Indonesia	12.9	4.4	8.5	10.0	129
Bottom 5	India	3.0	3.6	-0.5	4.0	12
Performers	Turkey	1.3	5.6	-4.3	1.5	2
	Colombia	-0.7	0.0	-0.7	4.1	-3
	Mexico	-1.6	5.5	-7.1	10.0	-16
	Uruguay	-3.4	2.1	-5.5	0.2	-1

Source: State Street Global Advisors, JP Morgan, Bloomberg as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. *Country and currency performance of JP Morgan GBI-EM Global Diversified Index. **Index impact is calculated by multiplying the period ending weight by total return.

South Africa was the best performer in Q3. The annual inflation rate eased to 4.4% in August, from 5.1% at the end of Q2 — this is just below the central bank's midpoint level of 4.5%. The South African Reserve Bank lowered its key interest rate by 25bps to 8% in September, following seven consecutive meetings where rates were kept at a 15-year peak of 8.25%. The South African rand appreciated against the US dollar by 5.08% in Q3 and closed at 17.27.

Thailand was another good performer in Q3. In August, the Bank of Thailand held its key interest rate unchanged at 2.5% for a fifth consecutive meeting, with the majority of the monetary policy committee agreed that the current interest rate is appropriate for the economy to achieve its potential and safeguard macro-financial stability. The Thai baht appreciated against the US dollar by 12.34% in Q3 and closed at 32.17.

Malaysia was another strong performer in the quarter. Recent data on domestic expenditure and export activity pointed towards sustained strength in the country's economic activity, while headline and core inflation rates remained within the projected ranges. In September, Malaysia's central bank kept its key interest rate unchanged at 3% for the eighth consecutive meeting. The Malaysian ringgit appreciated against the US dollar by 12.59% in Q3 and closed at 4.12.

Mexico was a notable underperformer in Q3. The major drag on performance came from the FX component. The Mexican peso depreciated against the US dollar by 7.50% in Q3 and closed at 19.69. However, bond returns were positive. The country's annual inflation rate decreased to 4.99% in August from a 14-month high of 5.57% in July. The Bank of Mexico reduced its benchmark interest rate by 50bps to 10.50% in Q3.

Colombia was another underperformer in the quarter. Risk premiums in Colombia increased due to falling oil prices and challenging fiscal conditions. Colombia's annual inflation rate slowed to 6.12% in August, the lowest reading since December 2021. The Central Bank of Colombia cut its benchmark interest rate by 100bps to 10.25% in Q3. The Colombian peso fell against the US dollar by 1.30% in Q3 and closed at 4,206.90.

Uruguay was another underperformer in the quarter, driven largely by negative FX returns. The Uruguayan peso depreciated against the US dollar by 4.63% in Q3 and closed at 41.80. Bond returns were however positive. In September, Uruguay's annual inflation dropped to 5.32%, in line with expectations and the sixteenth consecutive month when it has been within the central bank's target range.

Performance
Comparison of
JPM Local Currency
Benchmark vs ESG
Local Currency
Benchmark

The JP Morgan ESG GBI-EM Index returned 9.12% (in USD terms) in Q3 2024, thereby outperforming the standard benchmark JP Morgan GBI-EM Global Diversified Index, which returned 8.99%. This outperformance was driven by relative index overweights, especially in Poland (+2.3%), Czech Republic (+1.7%), and Romania (+1.7%), which contributed a total of +0.40% to excess returns. This contribution was partially offset by relative underweights in China (-3.4%), India (-1.4%) and Turkey (-0.5%), which detracted a total of -0.21% from excess returns, as the Chinese, Turkish and Indian local bonds delivered positive returns during the quarter. Marginal underweights (-0.1% each) in South Africa, Thailand, and Malaysia detracted a total of -0.06% from excess returns.

Figure 7

Key Return Drivers

of ESG EM Local

Government Bond Markets

JESG GBI-EM (ESG EM Local Currency)	Monthly Return (%)	3 Month Return (%)	YTD Return (%)
In USD			
Total Return (in \$)	3.35	9.12	4.98
FX Return (vs \$)	1.97	4.94	-0.65
Price Return (Local Currency)	0.95	2.82	1.55
Interest Return (Local Courrency)	0.43	1.37	4.08

Sources: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. Performance returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized.

Figure 8

Relative Over/
Underweights
(JESG GBI-EM vs
GBI-EM GD)

September 2024	Country	JESG GBI-EM (%)	GBI-EM GD (%)	Relative Weight (%)
Top 5 Overweights	Poland	9.7	7.4	2.3
	Czech Republic	7.1	5.4	1.7
	Romania	5.0	3.8	1.2
	Hungary	3.7	2.8	0.9
	Uruguay	0.2	0.2	0.1
Top 5 Underweights	Malaysia	9.9	10.0	-0.1
	Mexico	9.9	10.0	-0.1
	Turkey	1.0	1.5	-0.5
	India	2.6	4.0	-1.4
	China	6.6	10.0	-3.4

Source: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Country exposures are as of the date indicated, are subject to change, and should not be relied upon as current thereafter.

Hard Currency Market Highlights

EM hard currency sovereign debt returned +6.15% (in USD terms) in Q3 2024, as measured by the JP Morgan EMBI Global Diversified Index. The treasury component return (+5.20%) was the major contributor to performance. Hard currency assets were supported by the US soft landing narrative and the September rate cut by the Fed, in addition to country-specific factors. The contribution from the spread component was also positive (+0.90%), with the JPM EMBI GD spread narrowing by 30bps in Q3. While all sectors benefited from the continued rally in US Treasuries, spread returns were mostly among the higher yielding securities. The JPM EMBI GD yield fell by 92bps in Q3 and the high yield (HY) sub-index outperformed its investment grade (IG) counterpart.

Figure 9
Key Return Drivers
of EM Hard Currency
Government Bond Markets
in USD

EMBI GD (EM Hard Currency)	Monthly Return (%)	3 Month Return (%)	YTD Return (%)
Total Return (in \$)	1.85	6.15	8.64
Spread Return	0.67	0.90	4.60
Treasury Return	1.17	5.20	3.86
IG Sub-Index	1.26	5.62	5.14
HY Sub-Index	2.43	6.68	12.25

Sources: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. Performance returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized.

Figure 10

Best and Worst Performers

Across EM Hard

Currency Government

Bond Markets*

Q3 2024	Country	Total Return (%)	Spread Return (%)	Treasury Return (%)	Average Index Weight (%)	Index Impact (bps)**
EMBI Global Diversified		6.15	0.90	5.20		
Top 5 Performers	El Salvador	18.9	13.7	4.6	0.8	15
	Ecuador	16.7	11.7	4.5	1.2	20
	Argentina	16.1	11.4	4.2	2.0	32
	Lebanon	14.8	12.6	1.9	0.2	2
	Ukraine	10.2	7.0	3.0	1.1	11
Bottom 5 Performers	Namibia	2.1	-0.2	2.3	0.1	0
	Zambia	1.3	-5.1	6.7	0.3	0
	Sri Lanka	-3.8	-6.5	2.9	0.9	-3
	Venezuela	-9.6	-11.5	2.1	0.5	-5
	Maldives	-12.5	-14.6	2.5	0.1	-1

Source: State Street Global Advisors, JP Morgan, Bloomberg as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. *Country and currency performance of JPM EMBI Global Diversified Index. **Index impact is calculated by multiplying the period ending weight by total return.

Argentina outperformed in Q3, contributing 32bps to index returns. Senators in Argentina approved a bill that defies President Javier Milei's bid to balance the government's books by reworking the calculation methodology for pension payments. While President Milei defeated an attempt by opposition parties to raise expenditure on pension payments, he saw a subsequent decline in his approval ratings. Argentina's foreign currency deposits have increased by around \$8 billion since Javier Milei took office in December, driven by a series of pro-market measures and incentives to bring dollars back into the financial system.

El Salvador was another good performer in Q3, contributing 15bps to index returns. In August, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) acknowledged the progress made in negotiations on a support program that focused on policies to strengthen public finances, boost bank reserve buffers, improve governance and transparency, and mitigate the risks from Bitcoin. In September, President Nayib Bukele stated that the 2025 budget would not involve issuing new debt, implying plans for fiscal austerity that is a key step in procuring an IMF program.

Ecuador was another good performer in Q3, contributing 20bps to index returns, as the country's hard currency debt benefited from spread compression in the quarter. Ecuador benefited from a seven-year US\$500 million loan, approved by the board of directors of the Inter-American Development Bank. The loan is intended to cover short-term lending needs and to stabilize the economy. Ecuador's international reserves increased to US\$8,410 million in August from US\$7,223 million in July.

Venezuela was among the underperformers in the quarter, detracting 5bps from index returns. The spread component largely accounted for the poor performance amid persisting political turmoil and economic isolation. Venezuela held its presidential elections in July and investor sentiment was hit by claims of flawed vote processing and the controversial declaration of Nicolás Maduro as the winner without the requisite supporting evidence.

Sri Lanka also underperformed in Q3, detracting 3bps from index returns. Sri Lanka reached a draft deal with creditors to restructure \$12.5 billion of defaulted international bonds in an effort to recover from its worst ever financial crisis. However, investor sentiment was dampened by left-leaning politician Anura Kumara Dissanayake winning the country's presidential election after a historic second round of counting.

Maldives also underperformed in Q3, detracting 1bp from index returns. Fitch Ratings downgraded Maldives' long-term foreign currency issuer default rating in August to CC, from an earlier rating of CCC+, citing the country's falling reserves. The other key drivers for the downgrade included the country's deteriorating external financing and liquidity metrics that have made a default event more likely within the rating horizon.

Performance
Comparison of JPM
Hard Currency
Benchmark vs ESG
Hard Currency
Benchmark

The JP Morgan ESG EMBI hard currency index returned +6.37% (in USD terms) for Q3 2024, outperforming the standard benchmark JP Morgan EMBI Global Diversified Index by +0.22%. Amajor contribution to outperformance came from the treasury component (+5.29%). The macro backdrop that prevailed in Q3 in the form of reduced benchmark US Treasury yields, market expectations on Fed's policy path and the Fed's 50bps rate cut in September was more beneficial to the ESG benchmark compared to the standard benchmark. The ESG benchmark benefited to a greater extent from the narrowing of sovereign spreads compared to the standard benchmark. The HY sub-index of the ESG benchmark outperformed the HY sub-index of the standard benchmark by around 0.49%.

Figure 11

Key Return Drivers of
ESG EM Hard Currency
Government Bond
Markets in USD

JESG EMBI (ESG EM Hard Currency)	Monthly Return (%)	3 Month Return (%)	YTD Return (%)
Total Return	1.75	6.37	8.36
Spread Return	0.57	1.03	4.45
Treasury Return	1.17	5.29	3.75
IG Sub-Index	1.23	5.69	5.05
HY Sub-Index	2.38	7.17	12.33

Sources: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Index returns are unmanaged and do not reflect the deduction of any fees or expenses. Index returns reflect all items of income, gain and loss and the reinvestment of dividends and other income as applicable. Performance returns for periods of less than one year are not annualized.

Figure 12
Relative Over/
Underweights
(JESG EMBIG vs
EMBI GD)

September 2024	Country	JESG EMBI (%)	EMBI GD (%)	Relative Weight (%)
Top 5 Overweights	Romania	4.2	2.7	1.5
	Poland	4.3	3.0	1.4
	Hungary	4.0	2.8	1.3
	Uruguay	3.5	2.3	1.3
	Saudi Arabia	5.6	4.9	0.7
Top 5 Underweights	Pakistan	0.1	0.9	-0.8
	Turkey	3.3	4.3	-0.9
	Malaysia	0.7	2.0	-1.3
	Mexico	3.2	4.9	-1.7
	China	0.7	3.7	-3.1

Source: State Street Global Advisors, Bloomberg, JP Morgan as of 30 September, 2024. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Country exposures are as of the date indicated, are subject to change, and should not be relied upon as current thereafter.

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^{*} Pensions & Investments Research Center, as of December 31, 2023.

[†] This figure is presented as of June 30, 2024 and includes ETF AUM of \$1,393.92 billion USD of which approximately \$69.35 billion USD is in gold assets with respect to SPDR products for which State Street Global Advisors Funds Distributors, LLC (SSGA FD) acts solely as the marketing agent. SSGA FD and State Street Global Advisors are affiliated. Please note all AUM is unaudited.