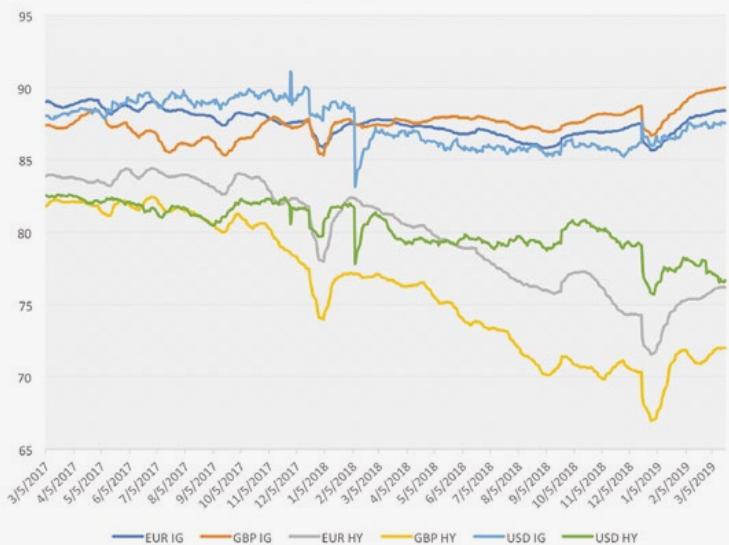


# ICE Data Services Corporate Bond Market Liquidity Tracker

March 2019

## Liquidity Tracker



Source: ICE Data Services

## Commentary

As discussed in previous Quarterly Reports, corporate bond market liquidity appears to show a sharp decline in Q1 2018, which largely correlates with the US-led sell-off in global credit markets. But IG remained relatively rangebound throughout 2018 followed by a drop at year-end. Subsequently, liquidity levels rebounded swiftly in Q1 2019 and, in the case of GBP IG, reached a two-year high.

EUR and GBP HY liquidity, however, shows a fairly steep decline throughout 2018, followed by a marked drop at year-end. Liquidity levels recovered throughout Q1 2019, reaching similar levels to Q3 2018.

While it is difficult to attribute causality, a possible explanation for the deterioration in EUR HY liquidity could be the announcement of the wind-down of the ECB's Corporate Sector Purchase Programme (CSPP). While HY is not in scope of the purchase programme, the sector has benefited from a "portfolio rebalancing" effect. Rate hikes in the US, widening CDS spreads and falling equities markets appear furthermore to have had a knock-on effect on reduced EUR and GBP liquidity. However, a stable outlook on monetary policy and tightening CDS spreads seem to have countered this effect in Q1 2019. Meanwhile, the economic uncertainty arising from Brexit appears to remain an underlying factor of volatility in EUR and GBP HY.



ICE Liquidity Trackers are designed to reflect average liquidity across global markets. The ICE Liquidity Trackers are bounded from 0 to 100, with 0 reflecting a weighted-average liquidity cost estimate of 10% and 100 reflecting a liquidity cost estimate of 0%. The ICE Liquidity Trackers are directly relatable to each other, and therefore, the higher the level of the ICE Liquidity Tracker the higher the projected liquidity of that portfolio of securities at that point in time, as compared with a lower level.

Statistical methods are employed to measure liquidity dynamics at the security level (including estimating projected trade volume capacity, projected volatility, projected time to liquidate and projected liquidation costs) which are then aggregated at the portfolio level to form the ICE Liquidity Trackers by asset class and sector. ICE Data Services incorporates a combination of publicly available data sets from trade repositories as well as proprietary and non-public sources of market colour and transactional data across global markets, along with evaluated pricing information and reference data to support statistical calibrations.

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