#### APOLLO

#### Credit market outlook:

High rates and slowing earnings growth creating opportunities for credit investors

Torsten Slok, Jyoti Agarwal, and Rajvi Shah

tslok@apollo.com

**Apollo Global Management** 

September 2023

Unless otherwise noted, information as of September 2023.

Confidential and Proprietary - Not for distribution, in whole or in part, without the express written consent of Apollo Global Management, Inc.

It should not be assumed that investments made in the future will be profitable or will equal the performance of the investments shown in this document.

## Legal Disclaimer

Unless otherwise noted, information included herein is presented as of the dates indicated. Apollo Global Management, Inc. (together with its subsidiaries, "Apollo") makes no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the accuracy, reasonableness, or completeness of any of the information contained herein, including, but not limited to, information obtained from third parties. Opinions, estimates and projections constitute the current judgment of the author as of the date indicated. They do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of Apollo and are subject to change at any time without notice. Apollo does not have any responsibility to update the information to account for such changes. Hyperlinks to third-party websites in these materials are provided for reader convenience only. There can be no assurance that any trends discussed herein will continue.

The information contained herein is not intended to provide, and should not be relied upon for, accounting, legal or tax advice and does not constitute an investment recommendation or investment advice. Investors should make an independent investigation of the information contained herein, including consulting their tax, legal, accounting or other advisors about such information. Apollo does not act for you and is not responsible for providing you with the protections afforded to its clients.

Certain information contained herein may be "forward-looking" in nature. Due to various risks and uncertainties, actual events or results may differ materially from those reflected or contemplated in such forward-looking information. As such, undue reliance should not be placed on such information. Forward-looking statements may be identified by the use of terminology including, but not limited to, "may", "will", "should", "expect", "anticipate", "target", "project", "estimate", "intend", "continue" or "believe" or the negatives thereof or other variations thereon or comparable terminology.



#### Table of contents

- 1. A default cycle has started
- 2. Yield levels
- 3. Spread levels
- 4. New issuance
- 5. Credit fundamentals
- 6. Ownership of corporate bonds
- 7. Loans/CLOs
- 8. Liquidity in US credit markets
- 9. Market technicals
- 10. Regional banks
- 11. Credit markets in a broader perspective
- 12. China HY

Source: Apollo Chief Economist

#### Thematic credit investing

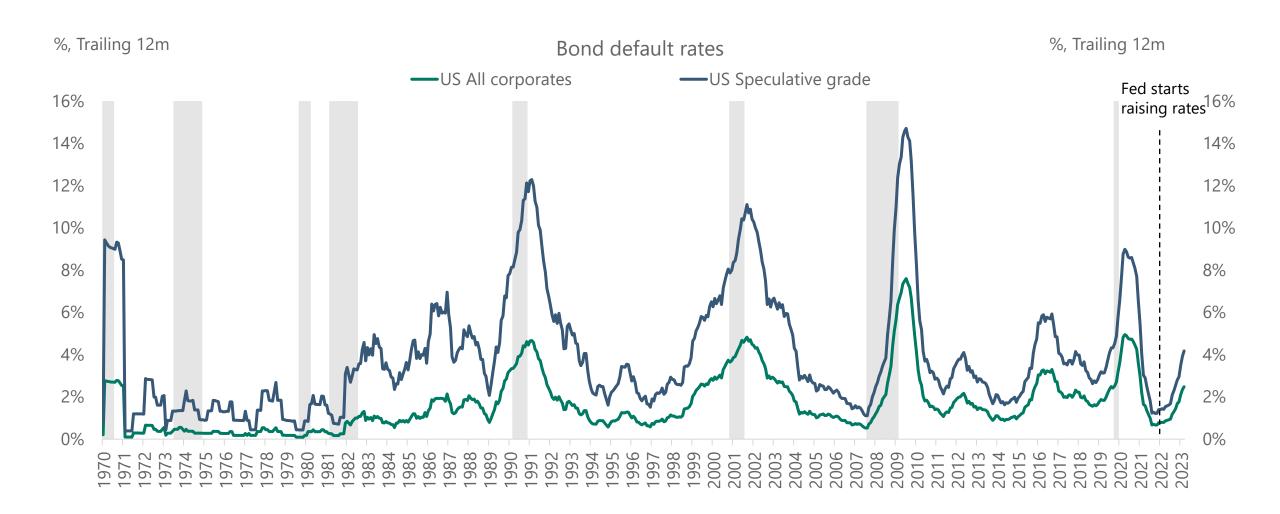
- 1. Up in quality: With the Fed staying higher for longer, higher debt costs will continue to weigh on margins and interest coverage ratios over the coming quarters, and both IG and HY companies will experience higher refinancing costs.
- **2. Large cap:** A default cycle has started with bankruptcy filings rising, and default rates will continue to rise over the coming quarters, impacting in particular middle market companies.
- 3. Low leverage, high interest coverage ratios: Lagged effects of monetary policy are slowing consumer credit growth with auto and credit card delinquencies rising and bank lending conditions tightening, leading to a significant slowing of loan growth impacting vulnerable consumers and firms.

Source: Apollo Chief Economist 4

A default cycle has started

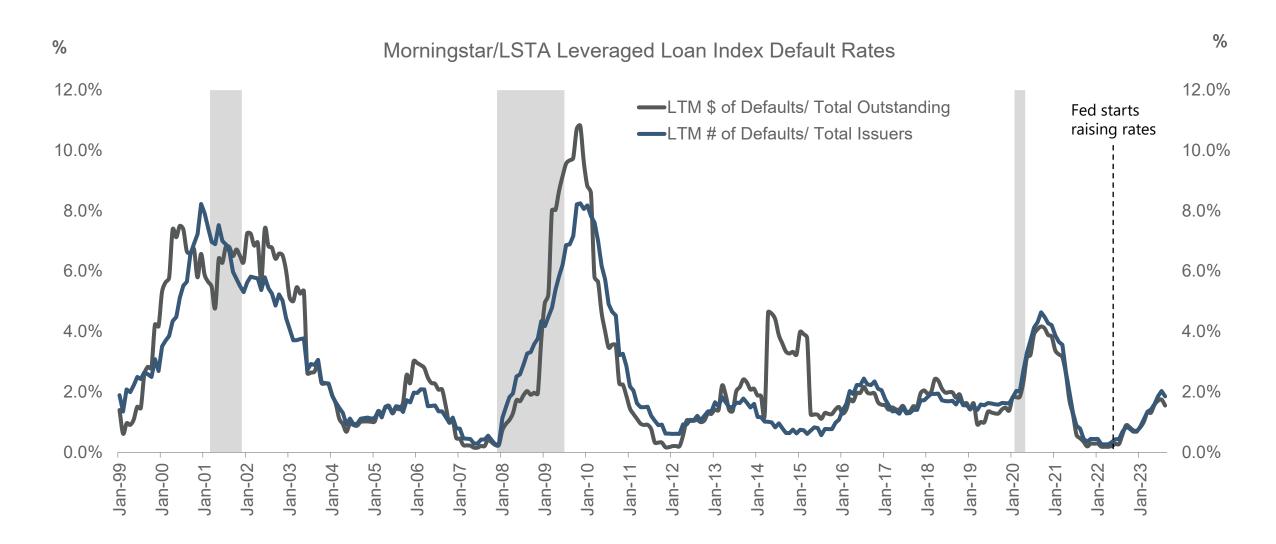


## A default cycle has started

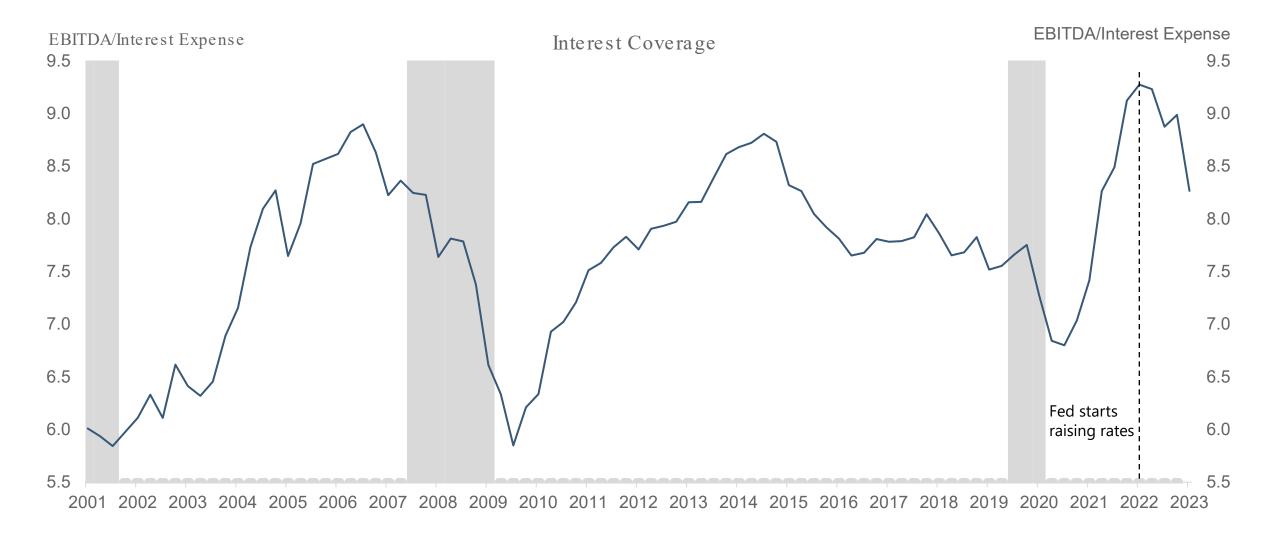


Source: Moody's Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

#### Leveraged loan index default rates starting to rise

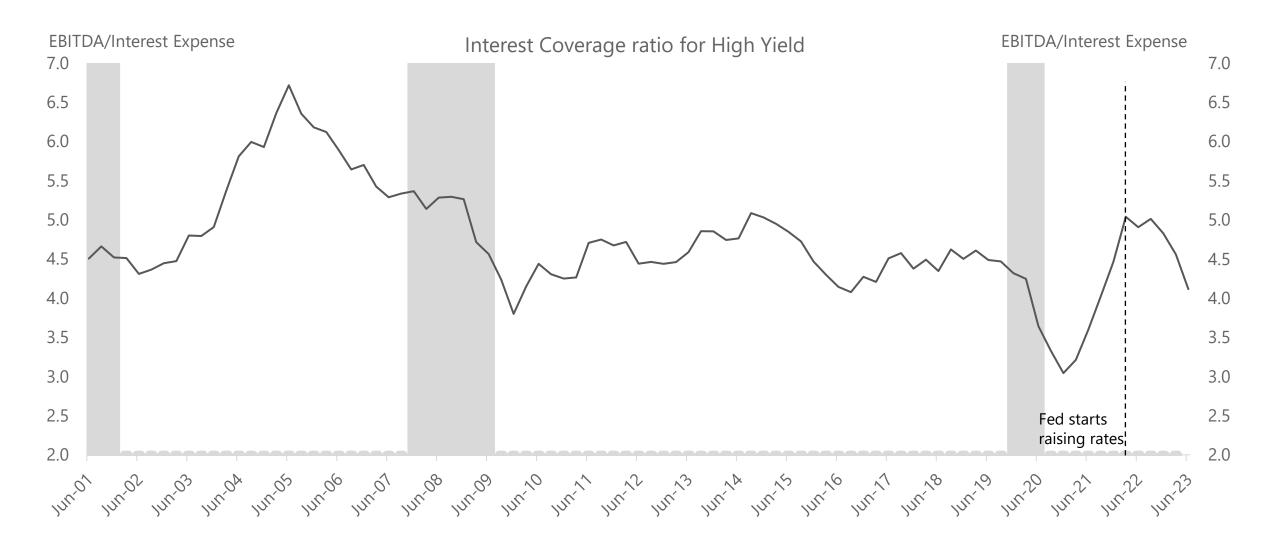


# IG ICR coming down



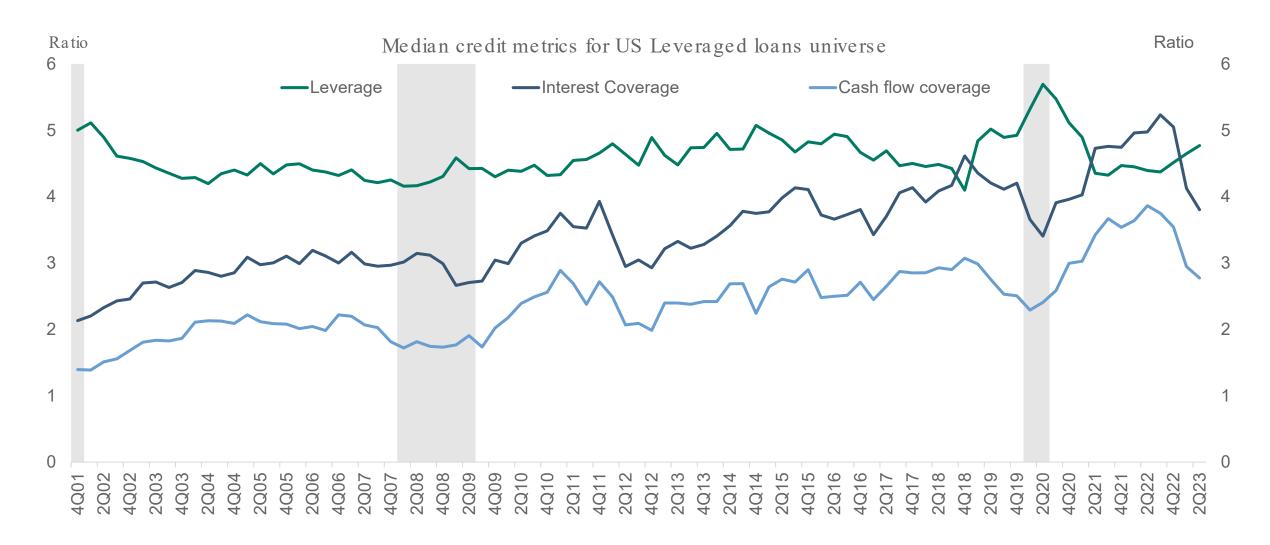
Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

#### HY ICR coming down



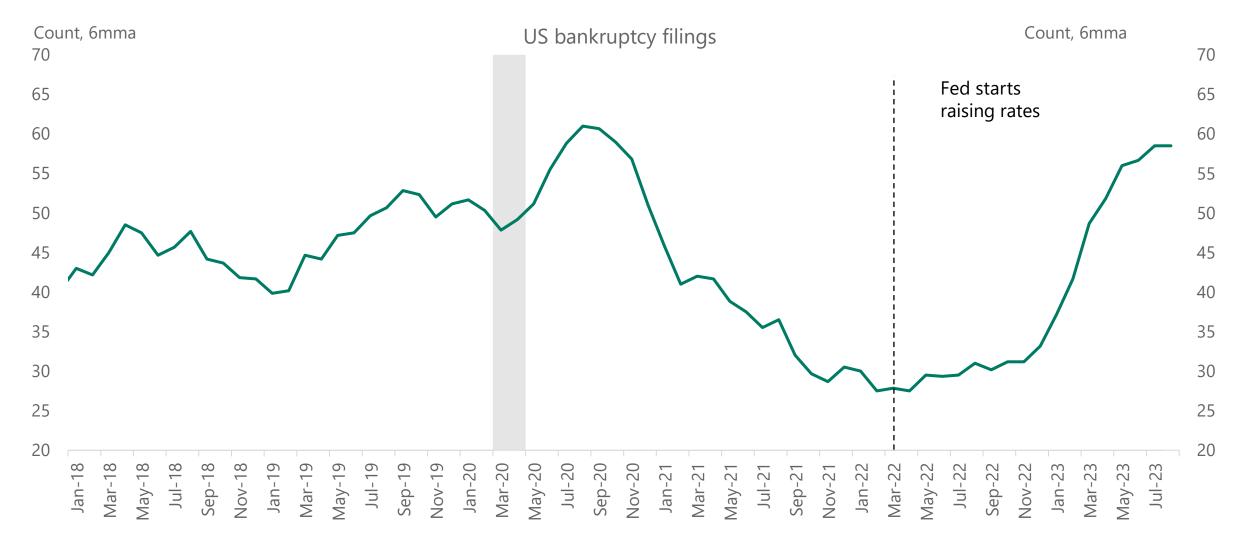
Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

# Credit metrics for leveraged loan deals: ICR and cash flow down. Leverage up.

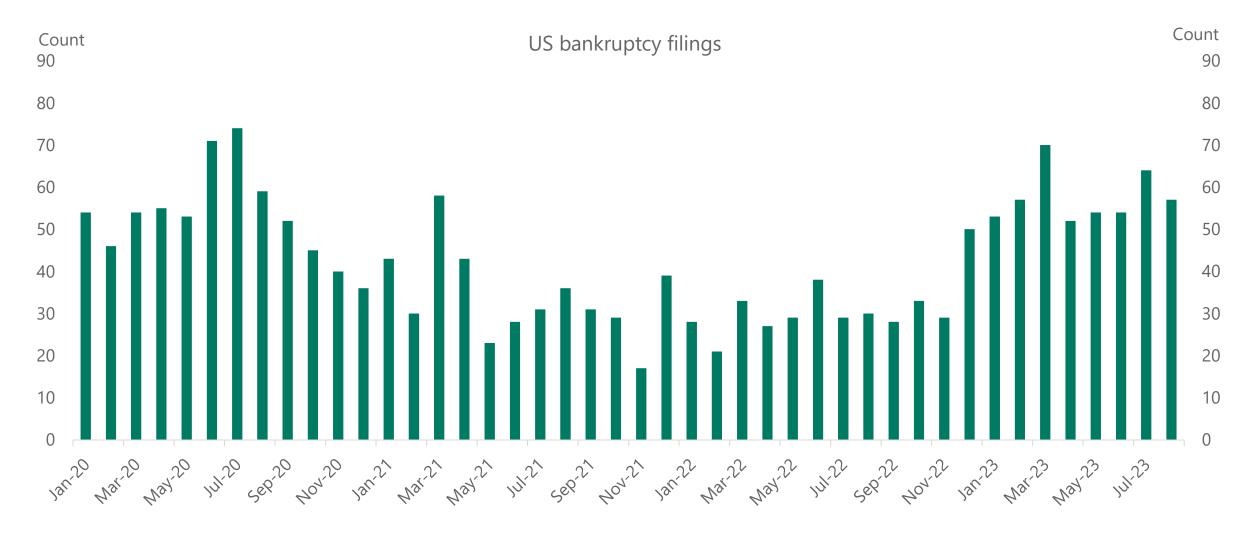


Source: Pitchbook LCD, Apollo Chief Economist

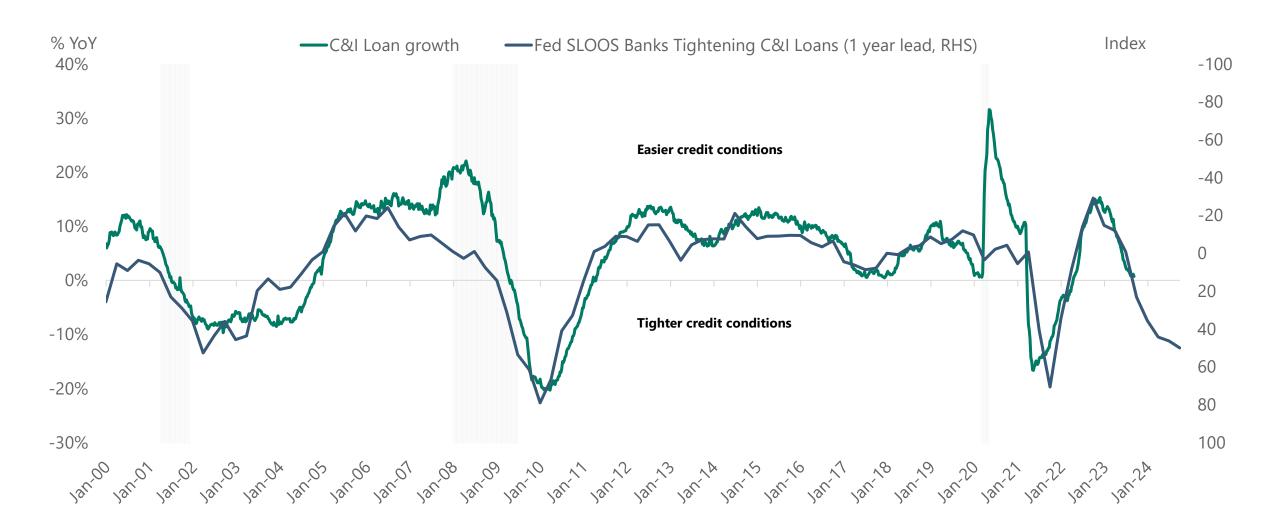
#### Bankruptcy filings for companies with at least \$10mn in liabilities



## Bankruptcy filings rising for companies with at least \$2mn in liabilities

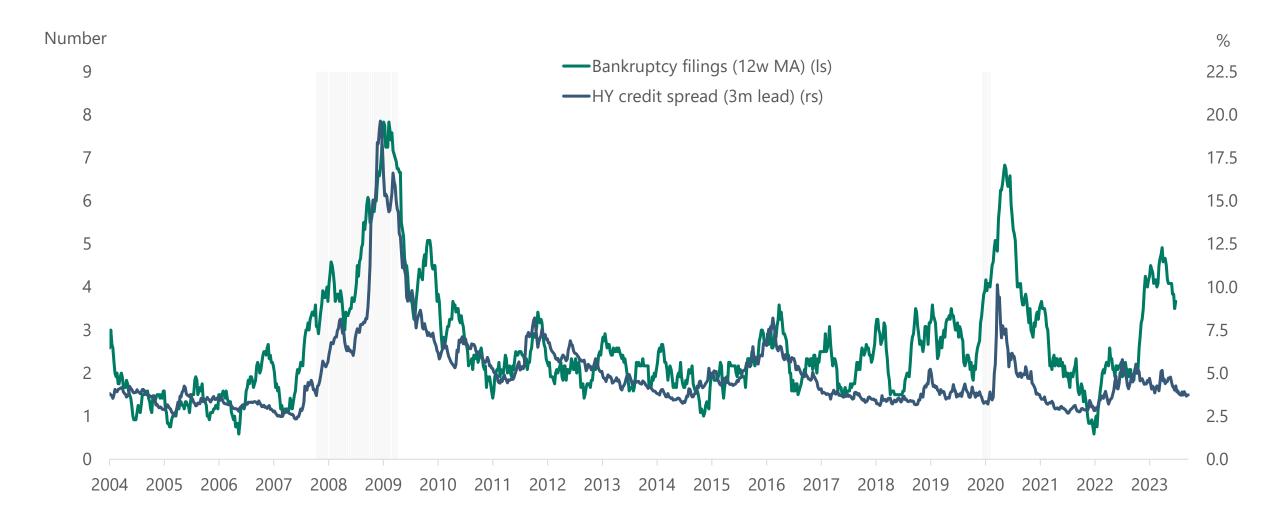


#### Bank lending will shrink significantly over the coming quarters



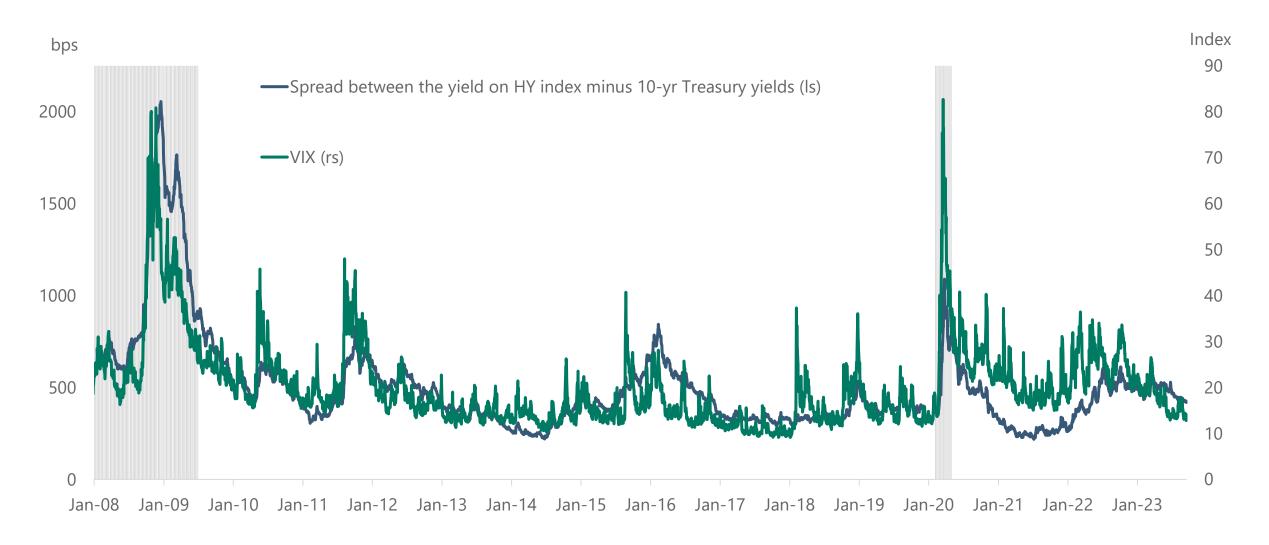
Source: FRB, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

# Disconnect between bankruptcy filings and credit spreads



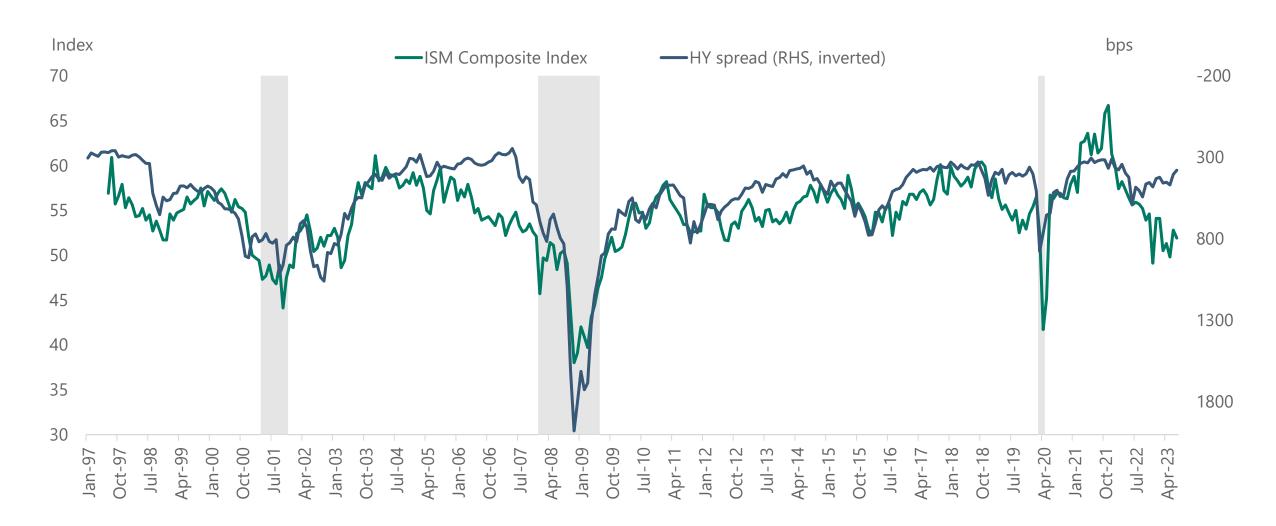
Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

# HY credit spreads and VIX tend to move closely together



Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

### Disconnect between spreads and economic activity

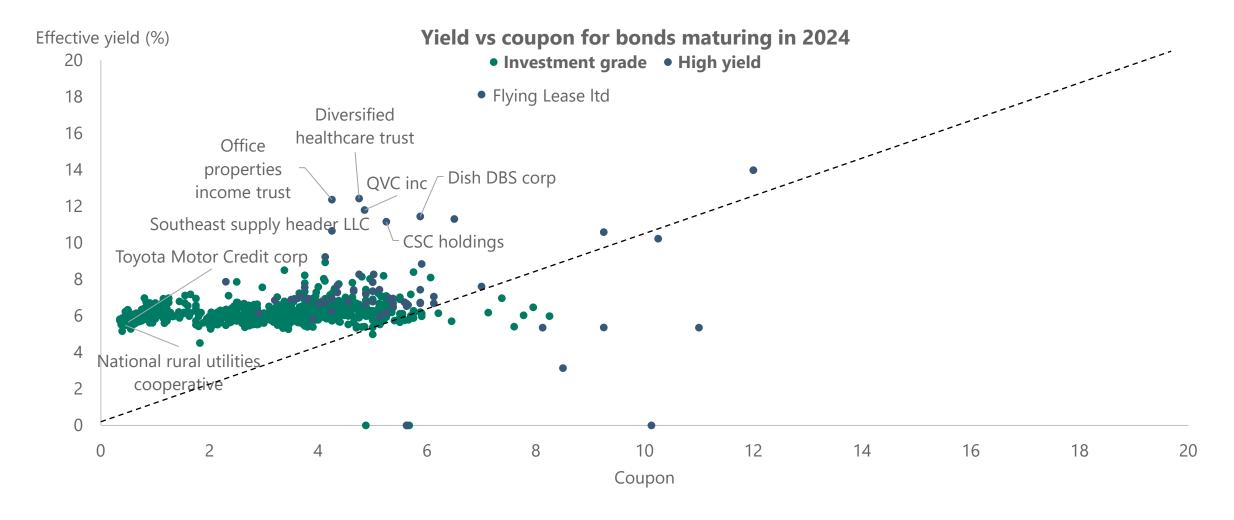


# Bonds more attractive than equities



Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

# Comparing coupons and effective yields for IG and HY bonds maturing in 2024

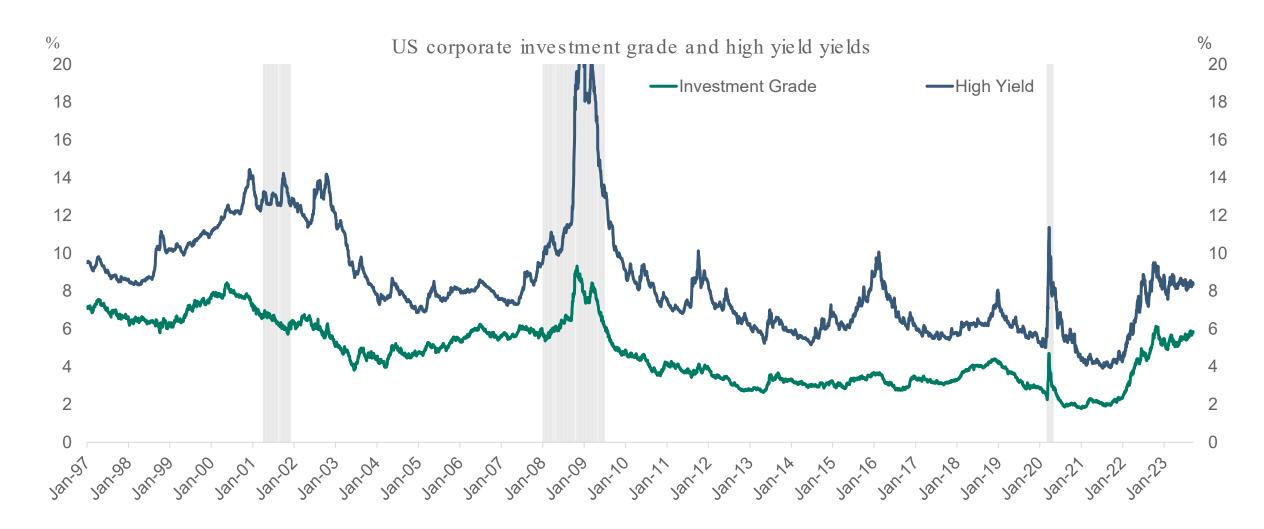


Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

# Yield levels

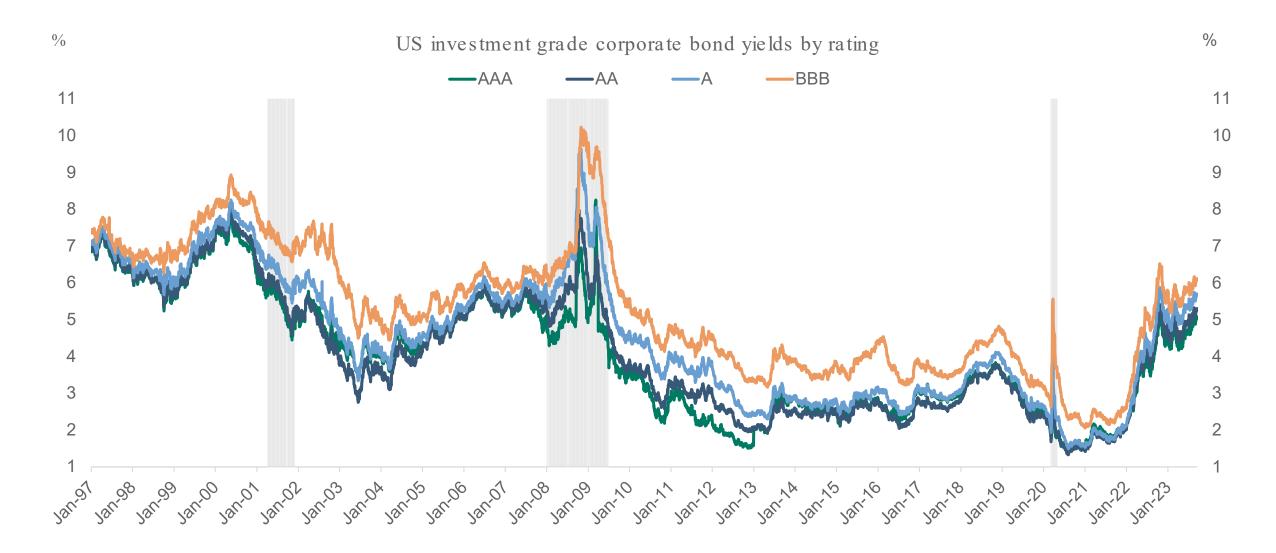


#### US IG yield around 5.8% and HY yield around 8.4%



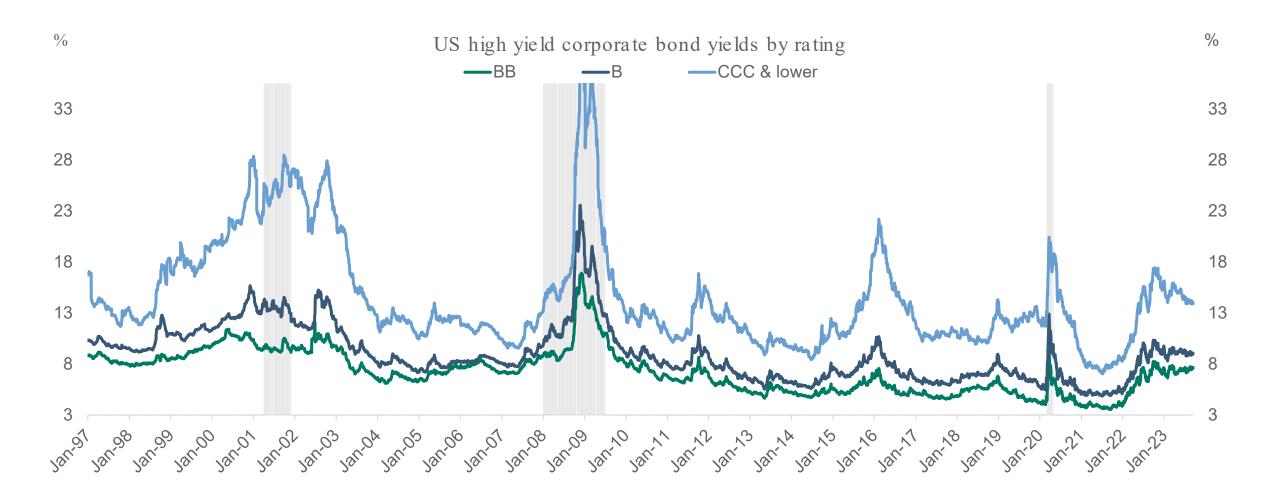
Source: ICE BofA, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist.

# US IG yield levels, by rating



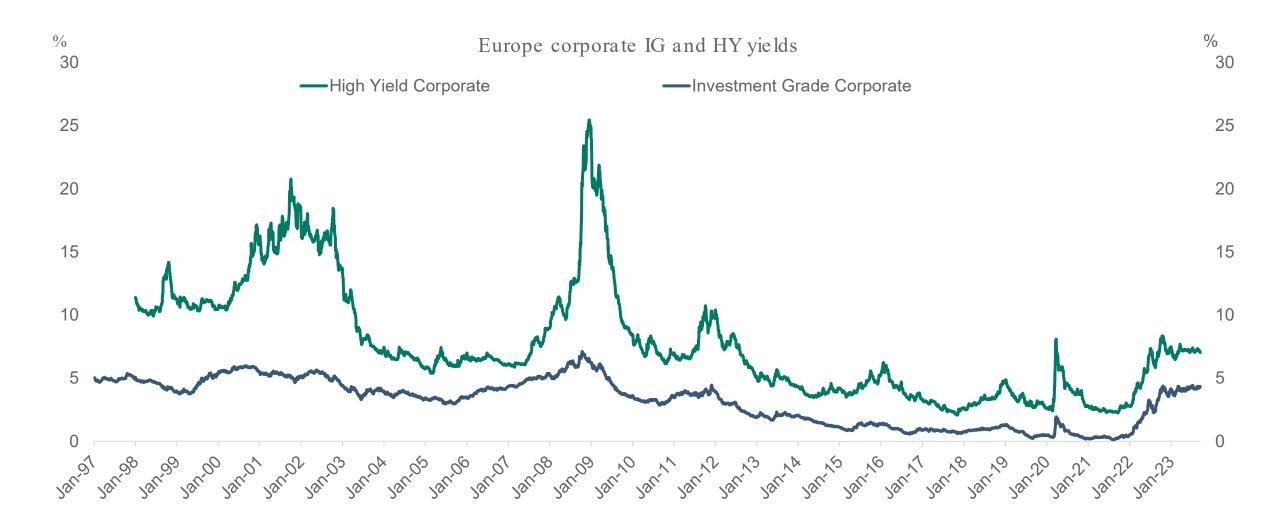
Source: ICE BofA, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

# US HY yield levels, by rating

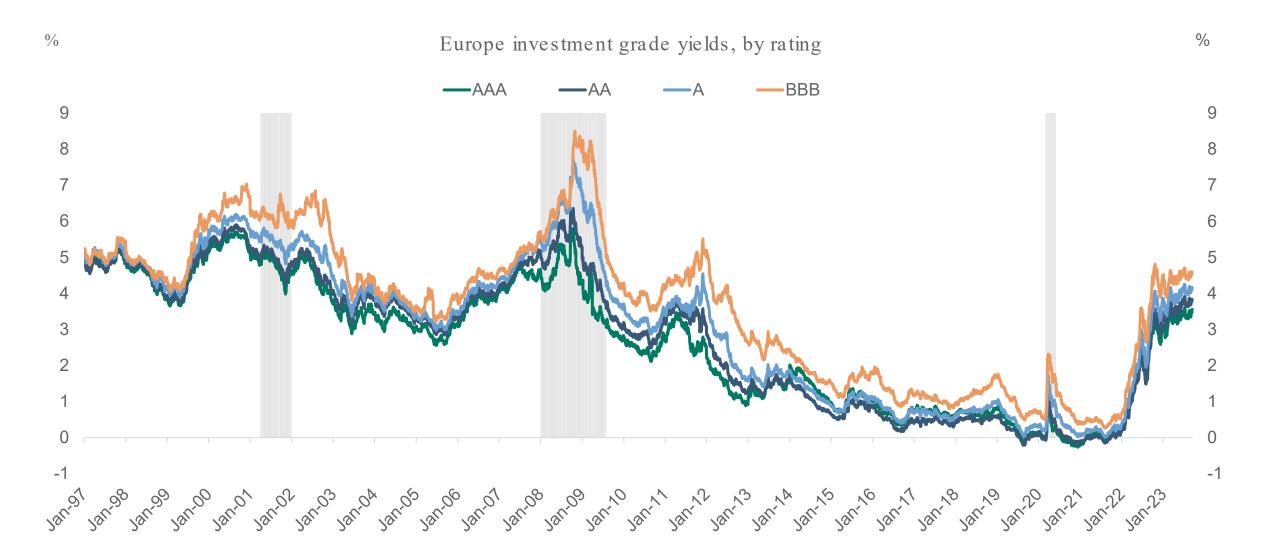


Source: ICE BofA, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

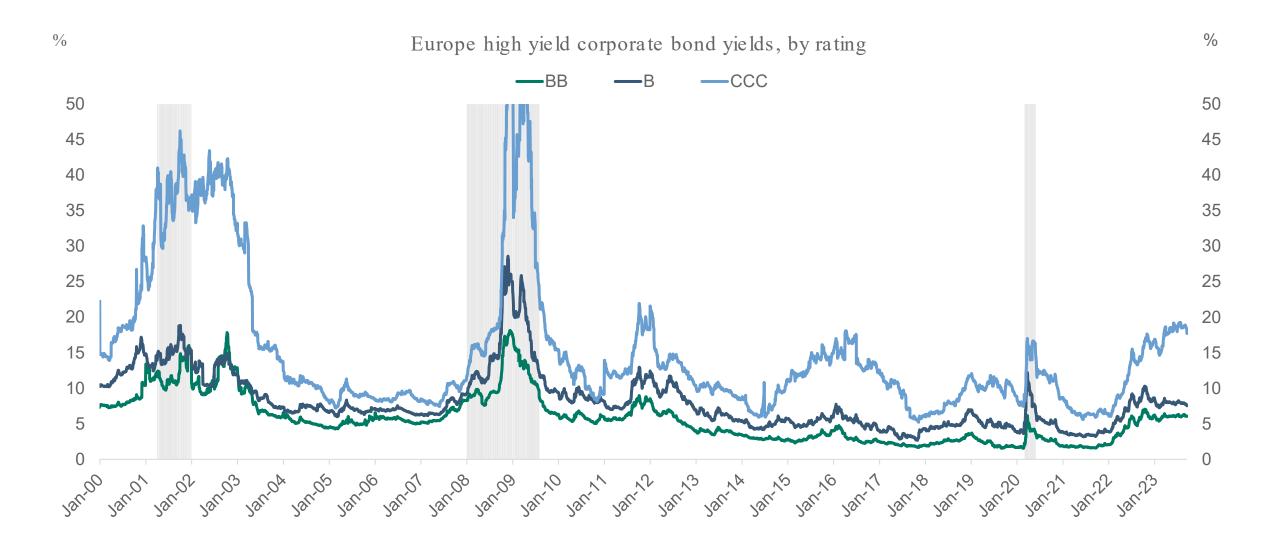
### European corporate IG and HY yields



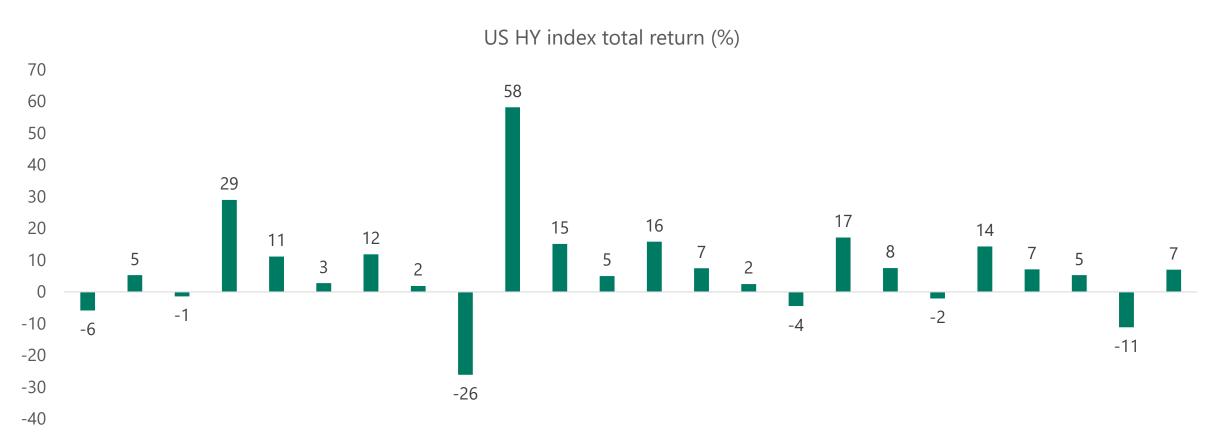
# European IG yield levels, by rating



# European HY yield levels, by rating



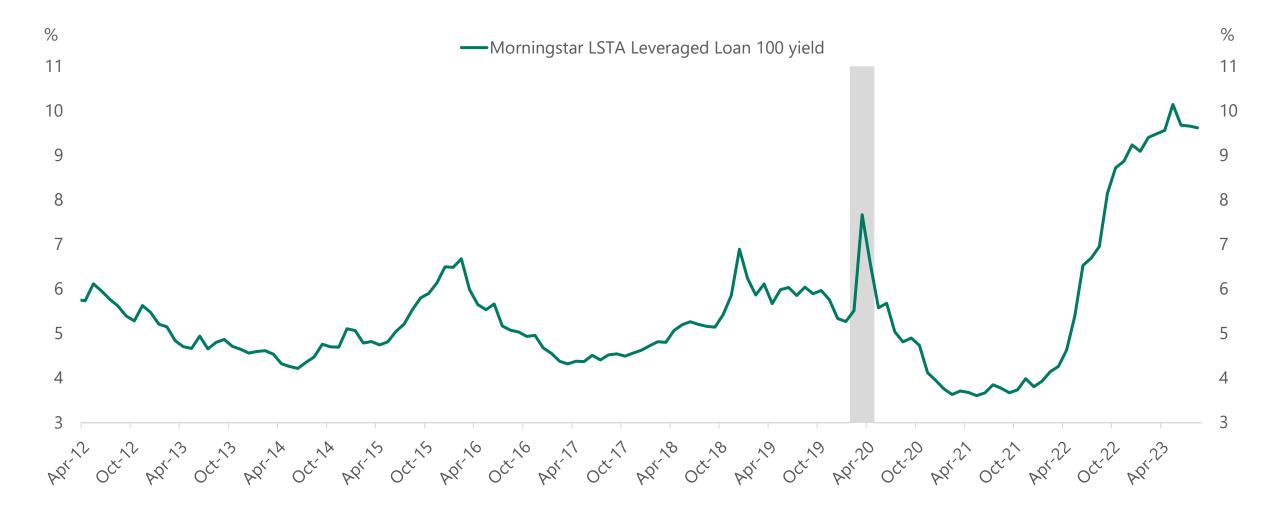
#### Annual returns for HY



2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 YTD

Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

# Yield for the leveraged loan index: 9.6%

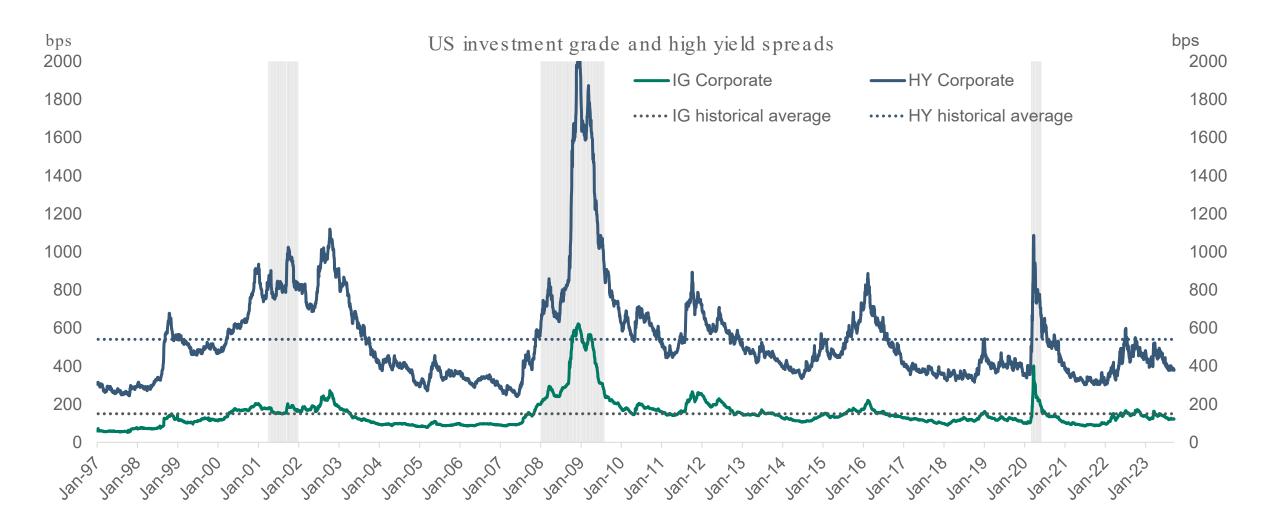


Source: Pitchbook LCD, Apollo Chief Economist

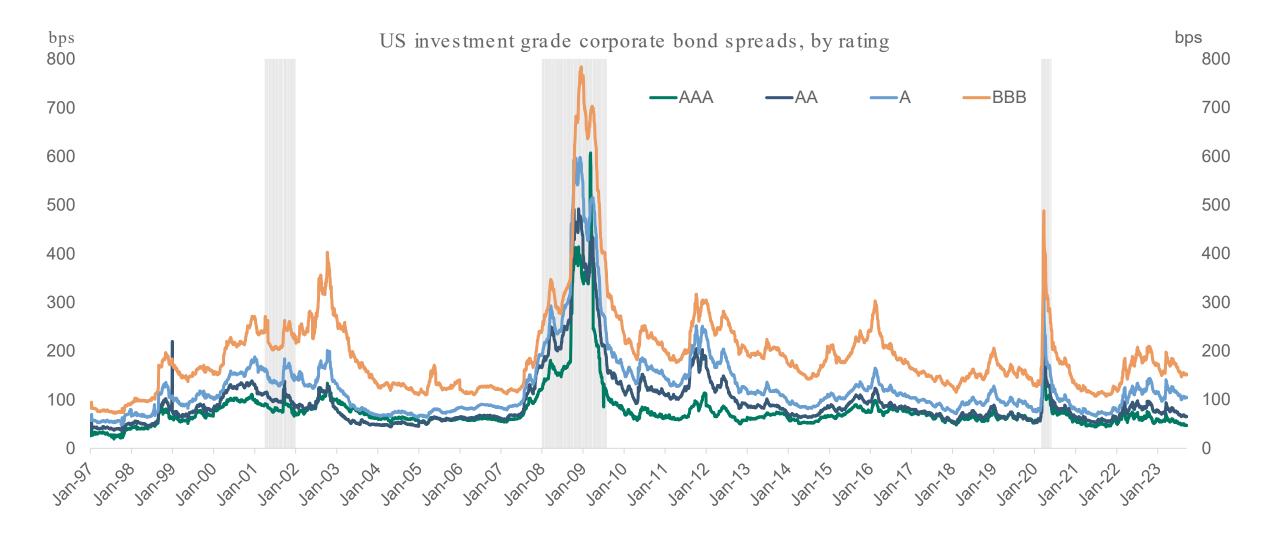
# Spread levels



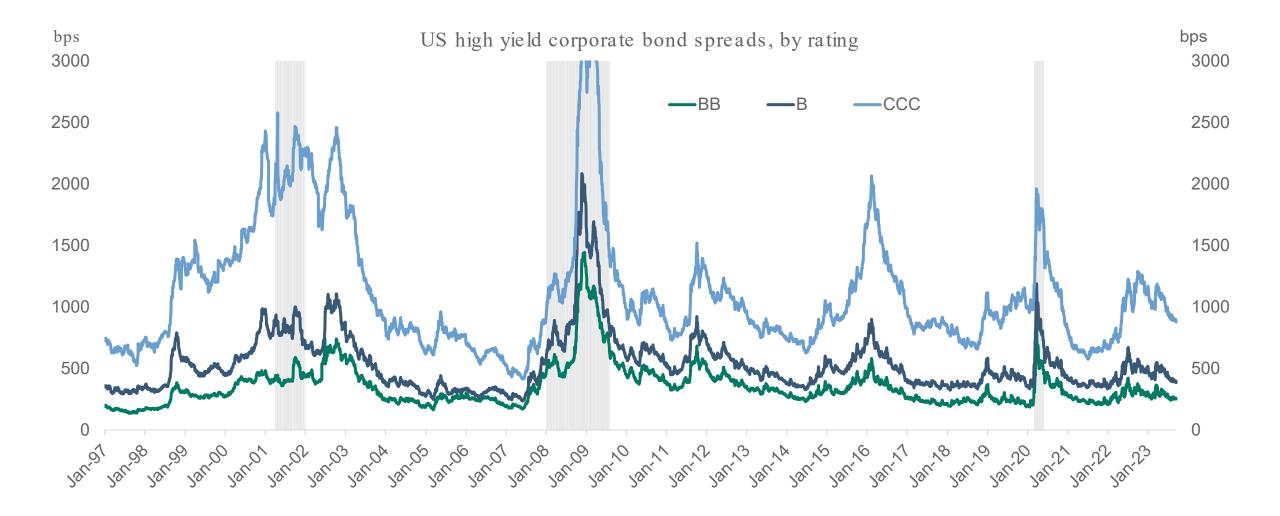
#### Credit spreads not pricing in a recession



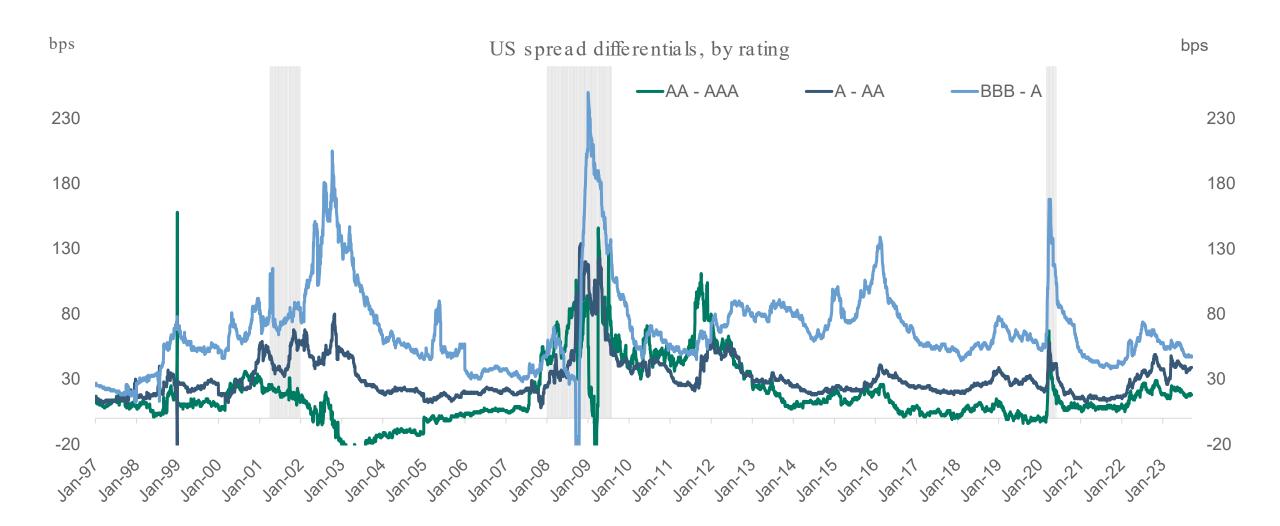
# IG spreads by rating



## HY spreads by rating



# IG quality spreads, some differentiation between single-A and double-AA



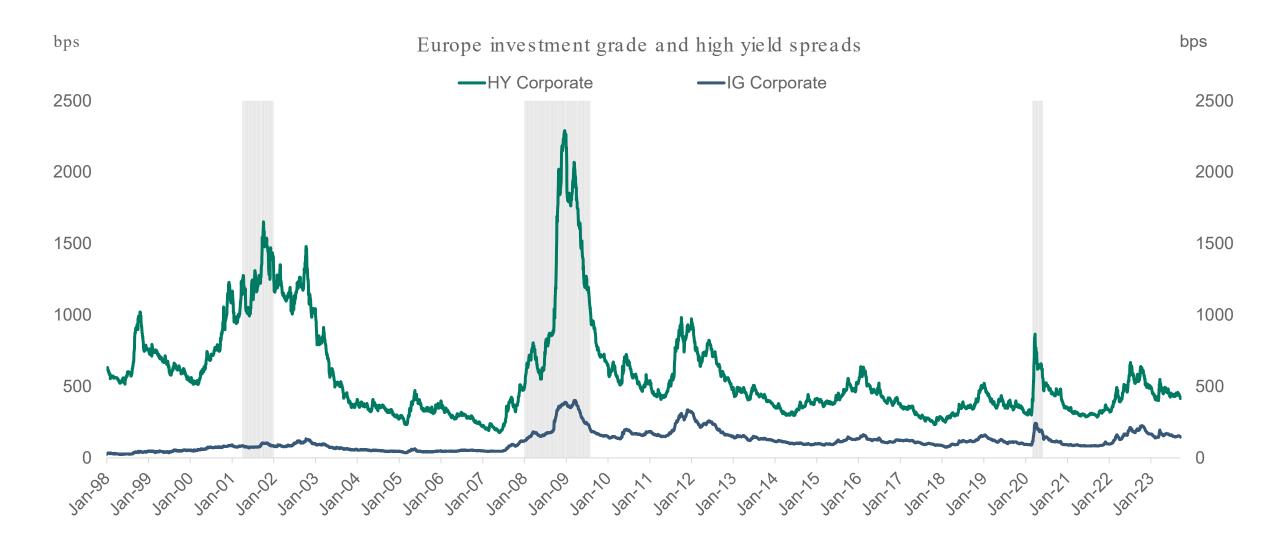
# HY quality spreads, less differentiation between CCC and single-B



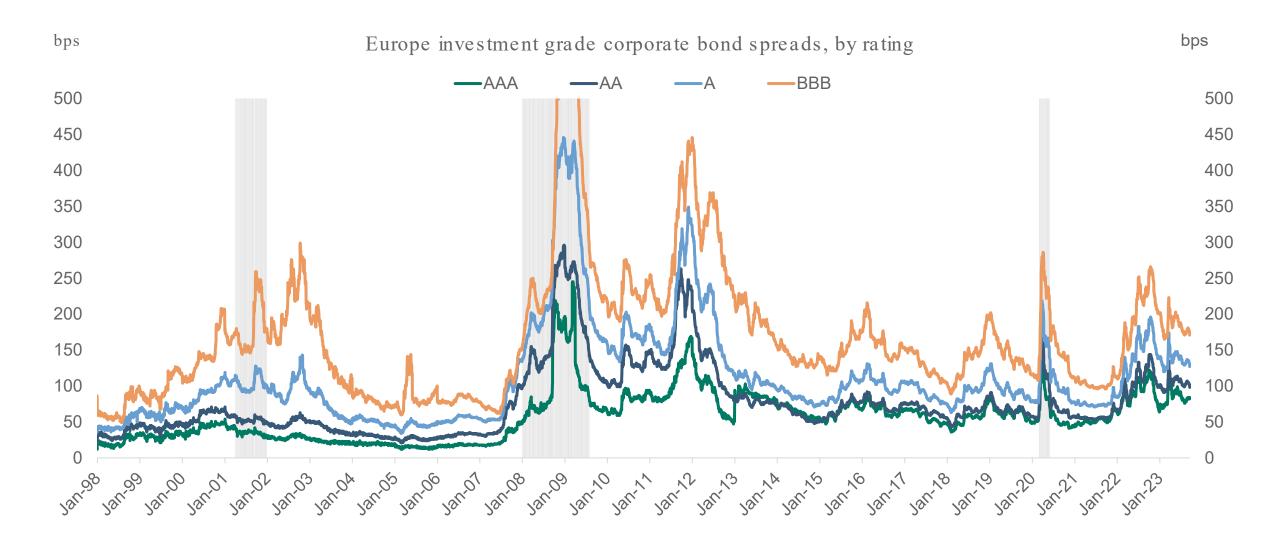
## US HY spread minus IG spread



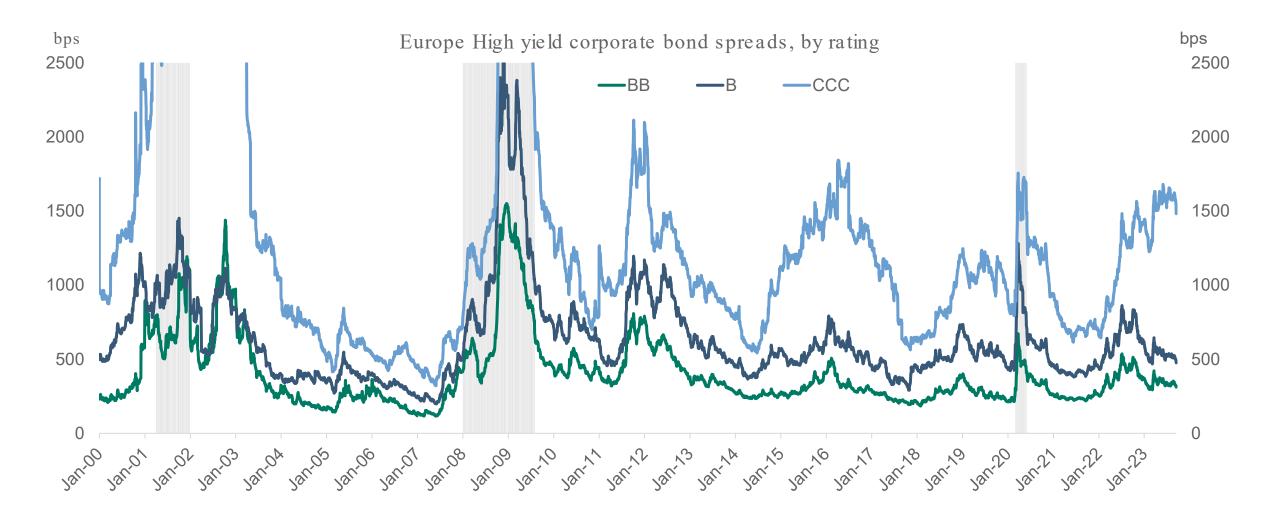
## European IG and HY spreads



#### European IG spreads by rating

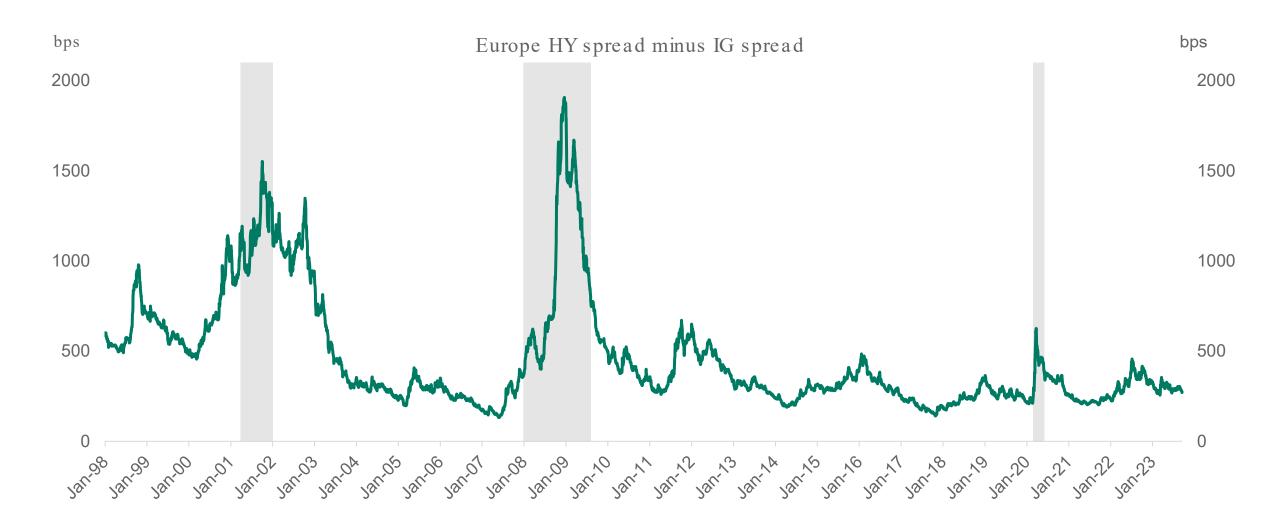


### European HY spreads by rating

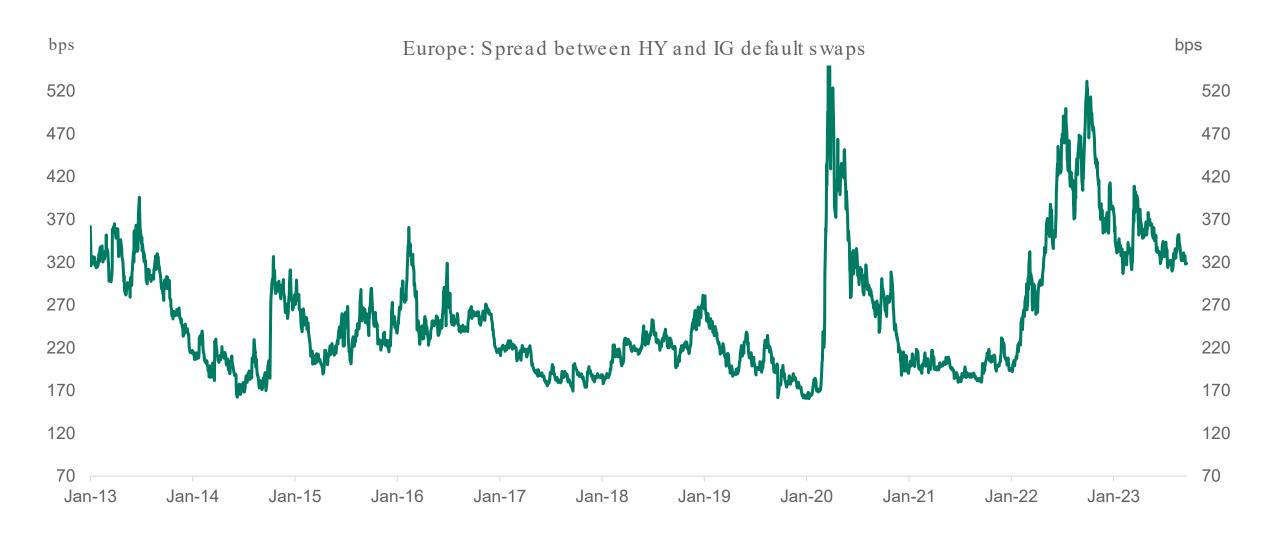


Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist.

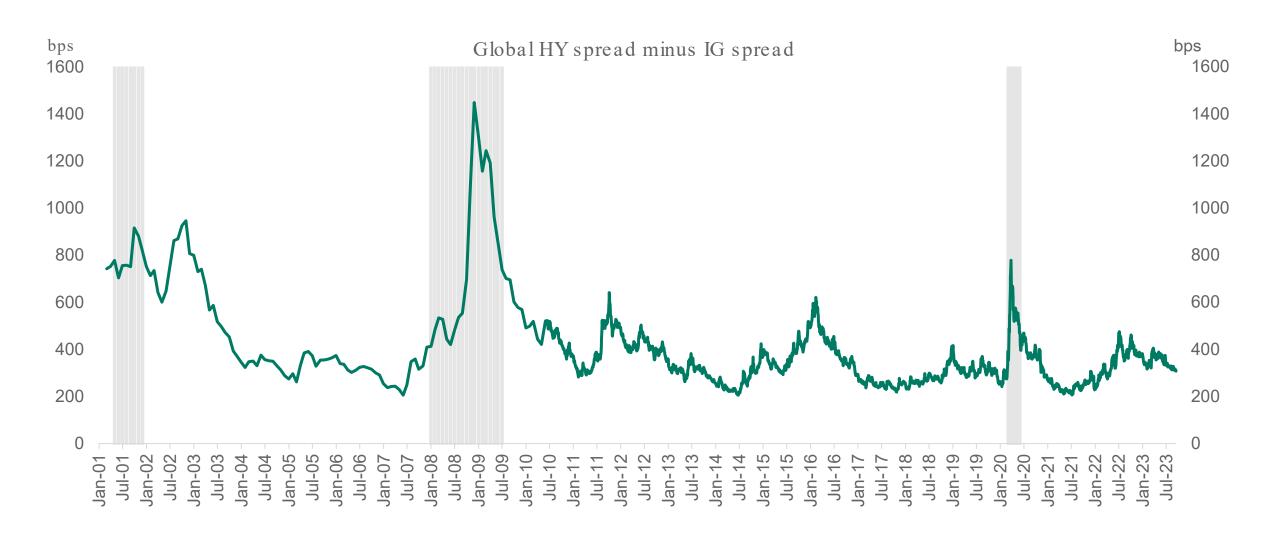
### European HY spread minus IG spread



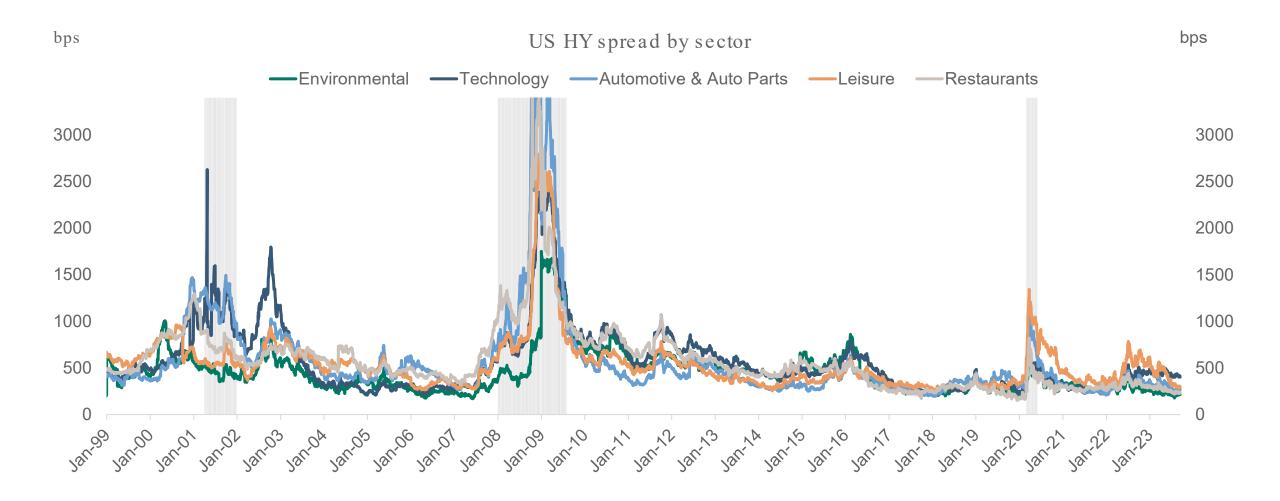
## Spread between Europe HY and IG default swaps



### Global HY spread minus global IG spread

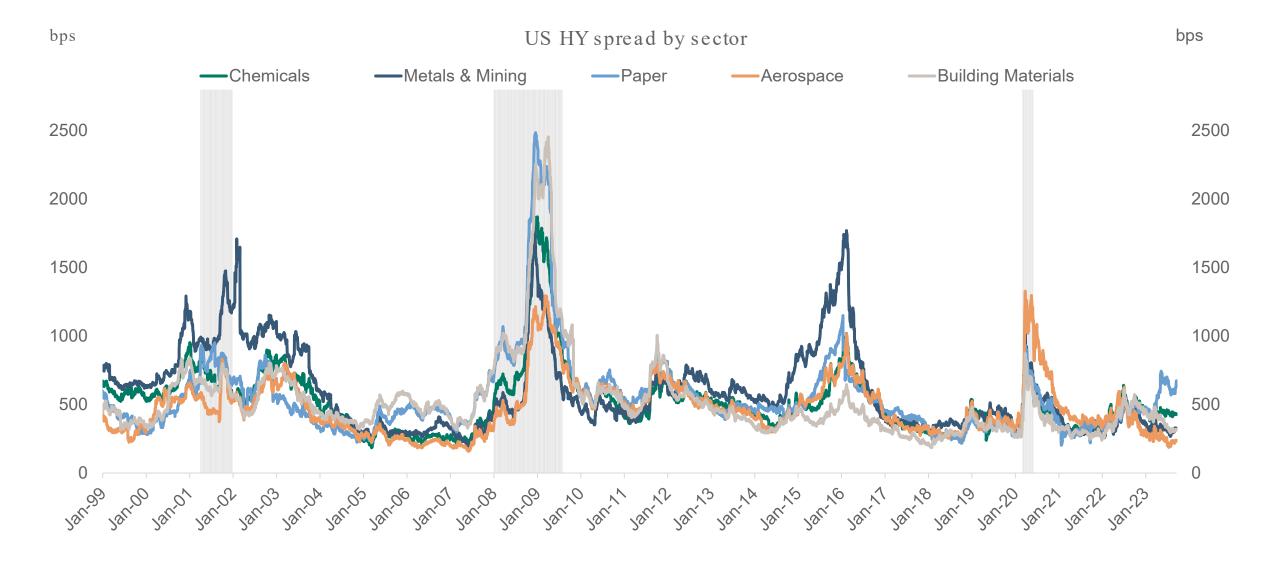


## HY spreads by sector: Spread for technology remains wide



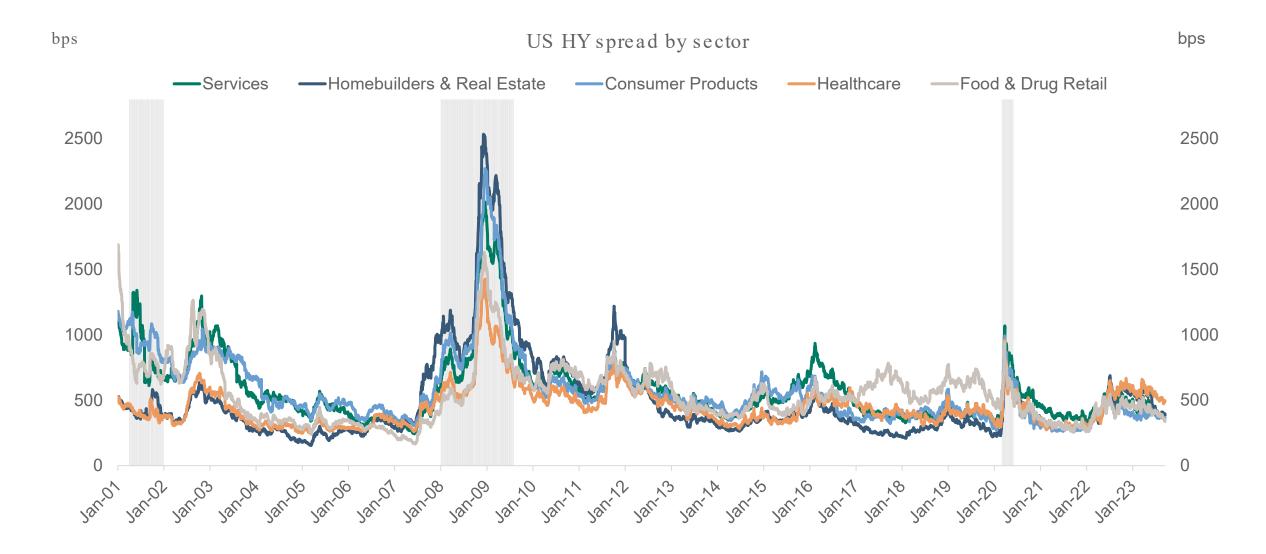
Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

### HY spreads by sector: Spread for paper has widened



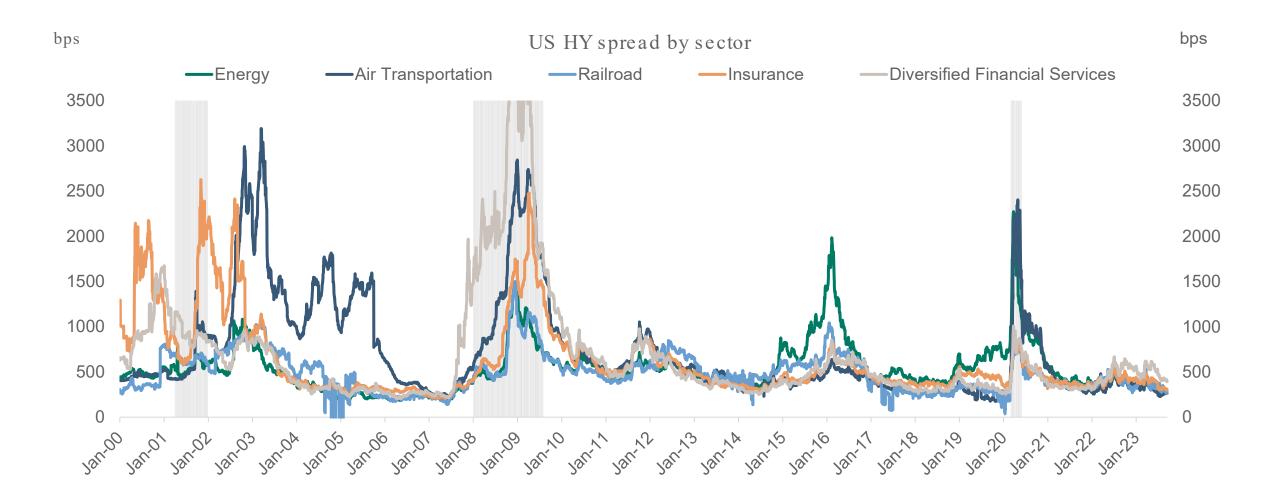
Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist 4,

### HY spreads by sector



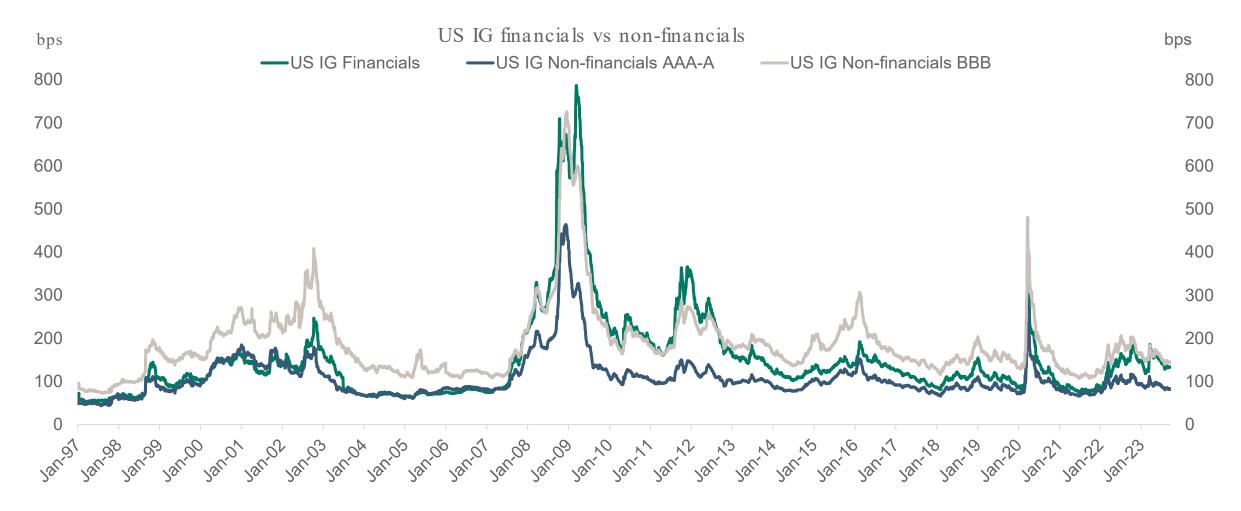
Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

### HY spreads by sector

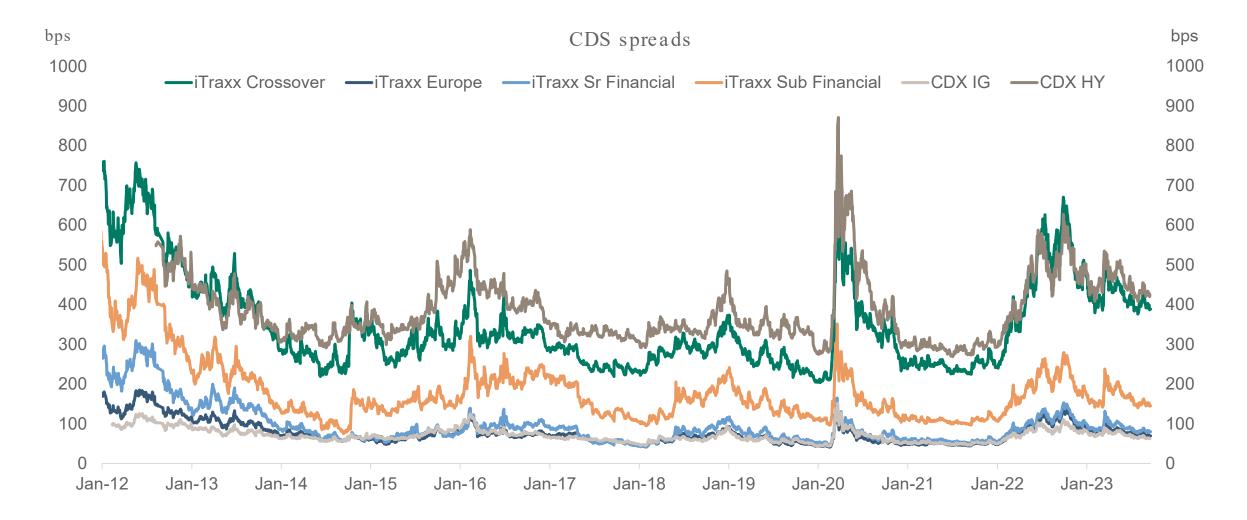


Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist 4.

### IG spreads for financials and non-financials

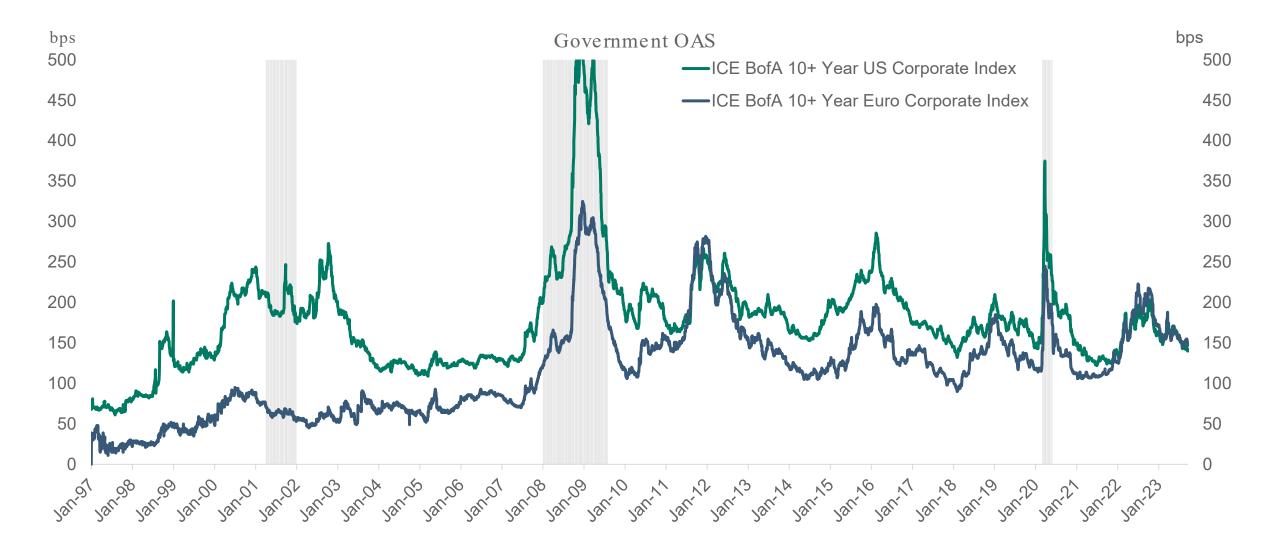


## CDS spreads



Source: Markit, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

### Long-duration IG spreads in US and Europe

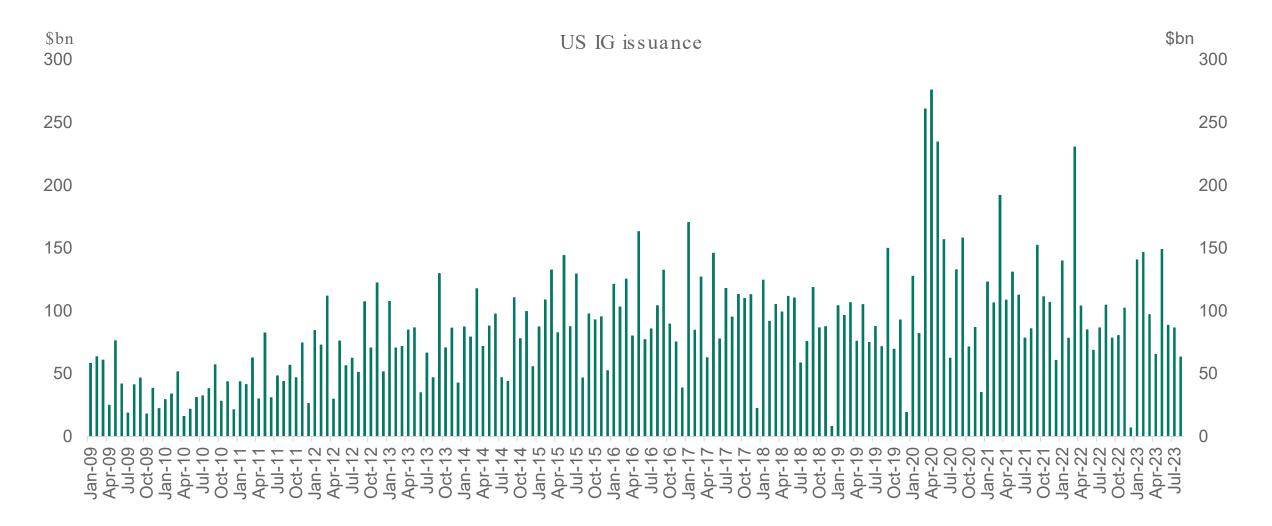


Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist 47

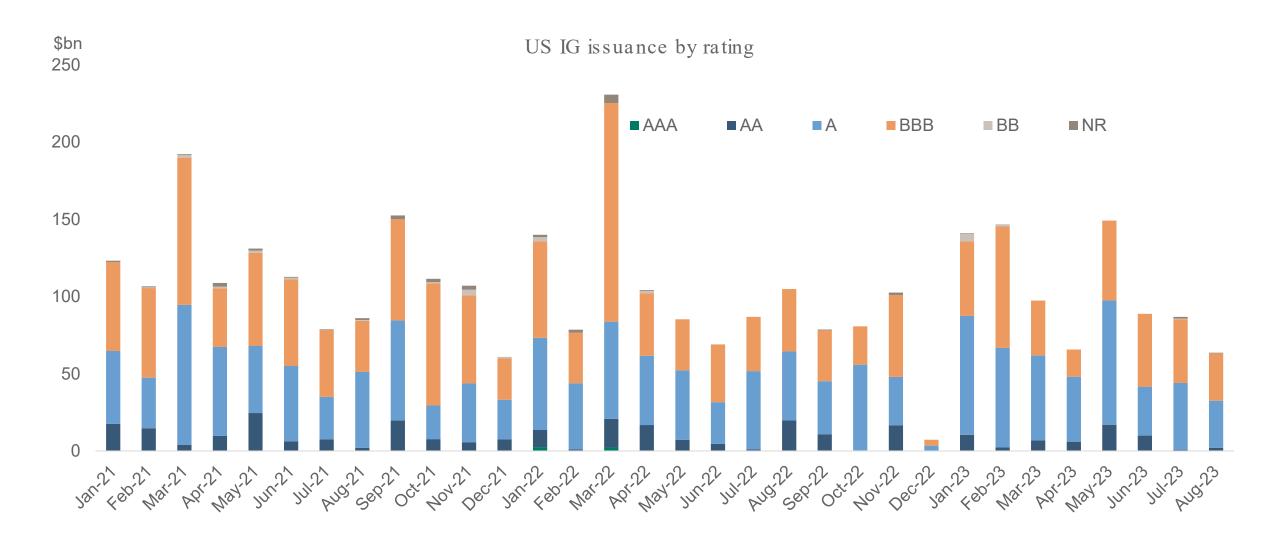
# New issuance



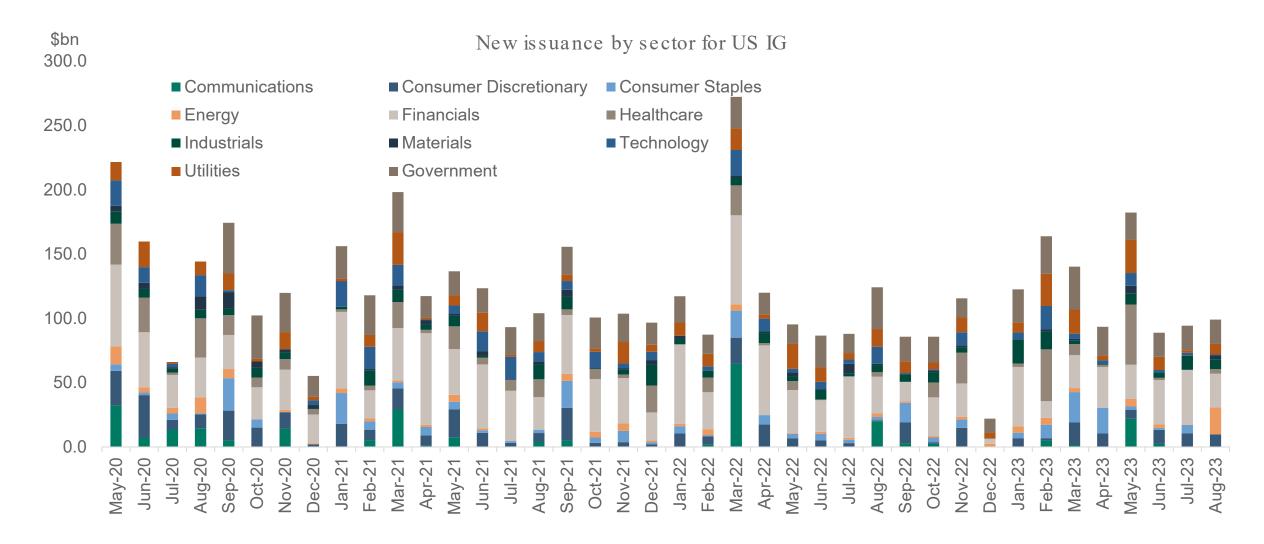
#### US IG issuance



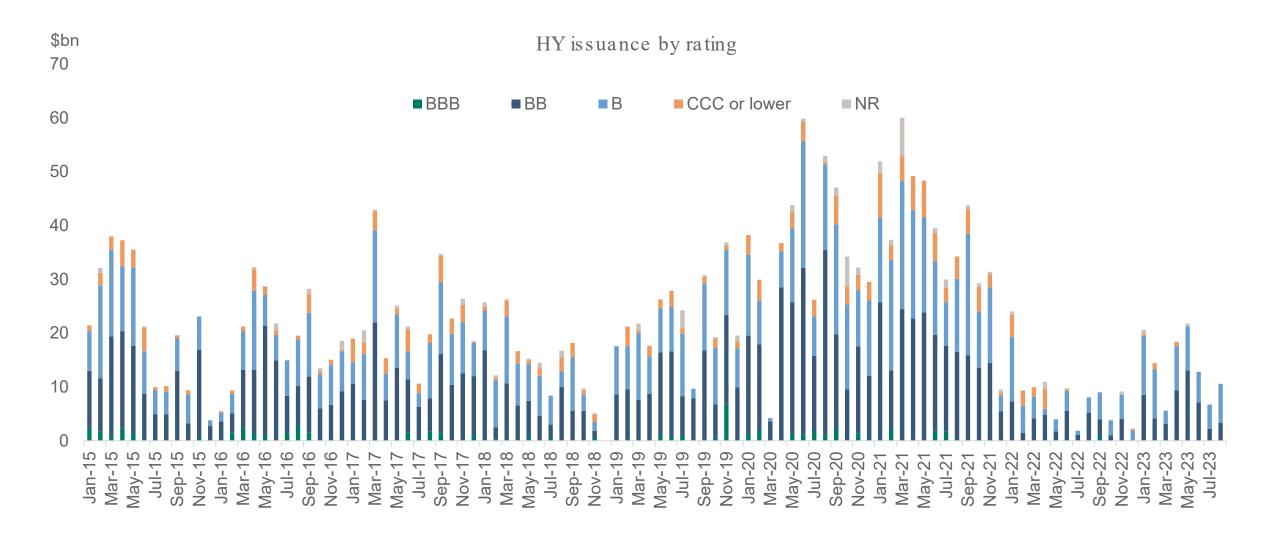
### IG issuance by rating



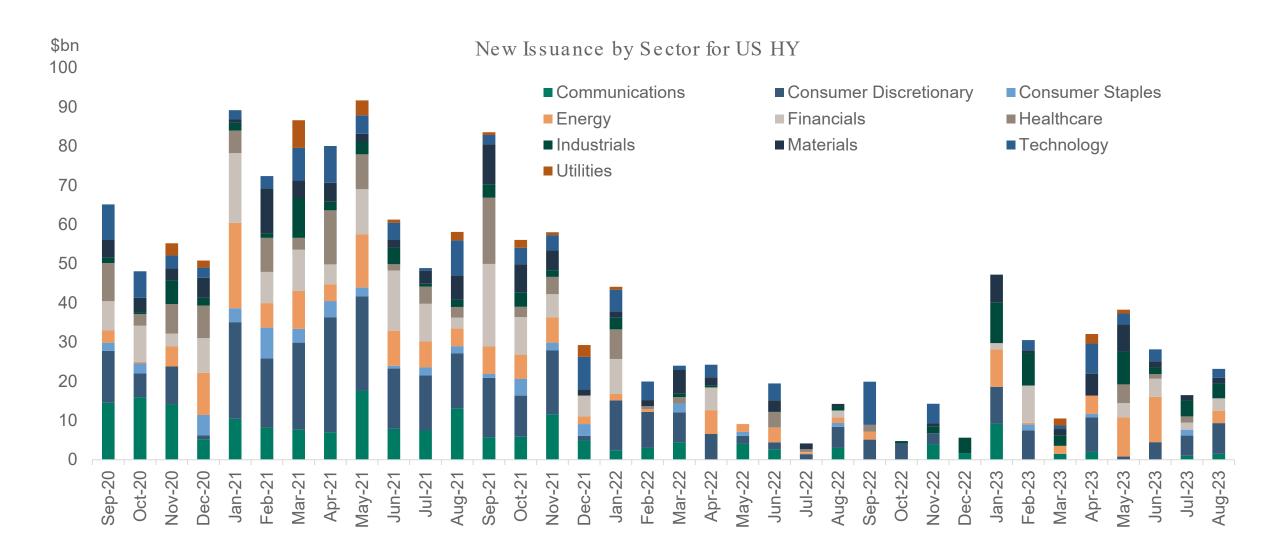
#### Sector distribution of new IG issuance



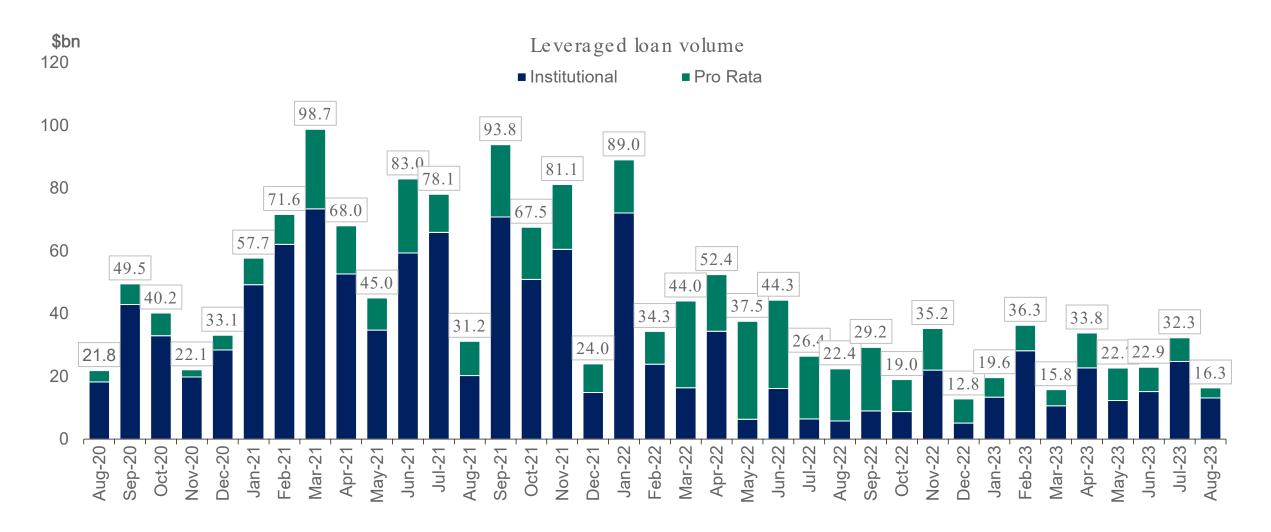
### HY issuance by rating



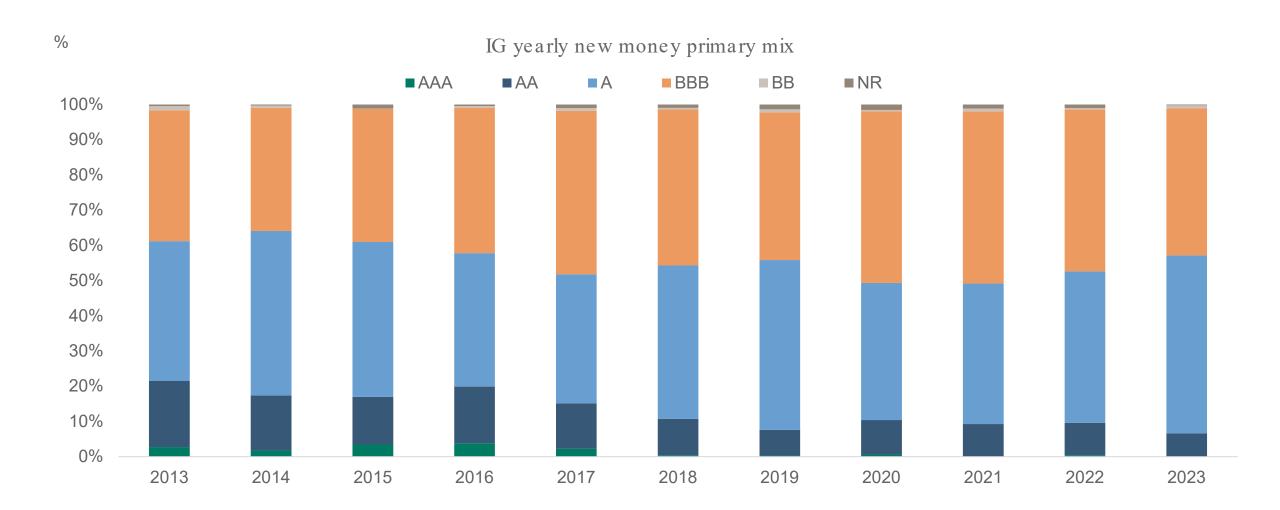
#### Sector distribution of new HY issuance



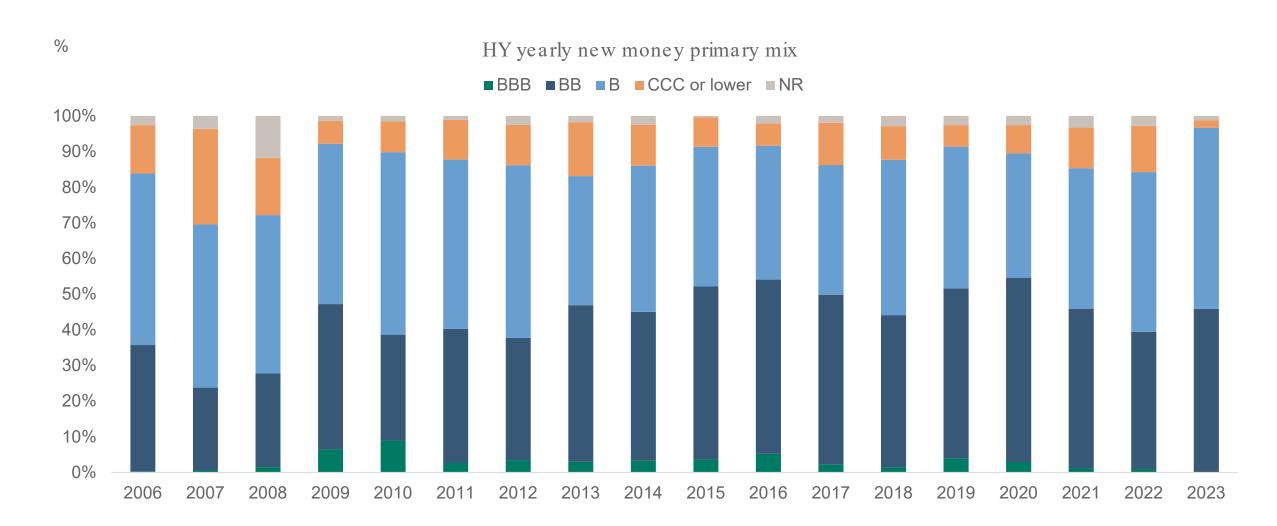
### Leveraged loan volume



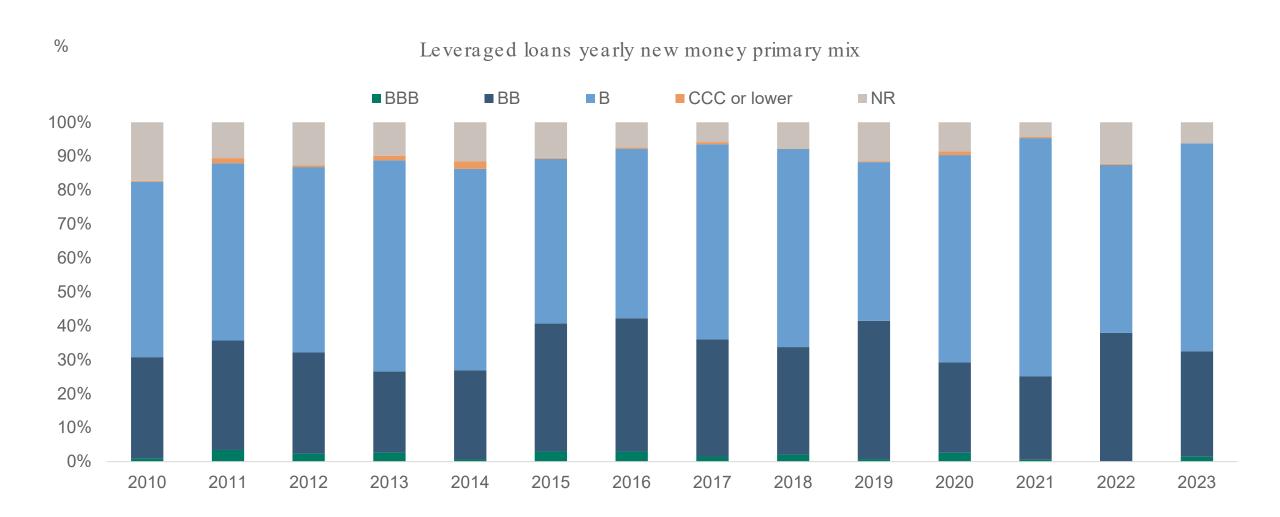
## IG new money primary mix



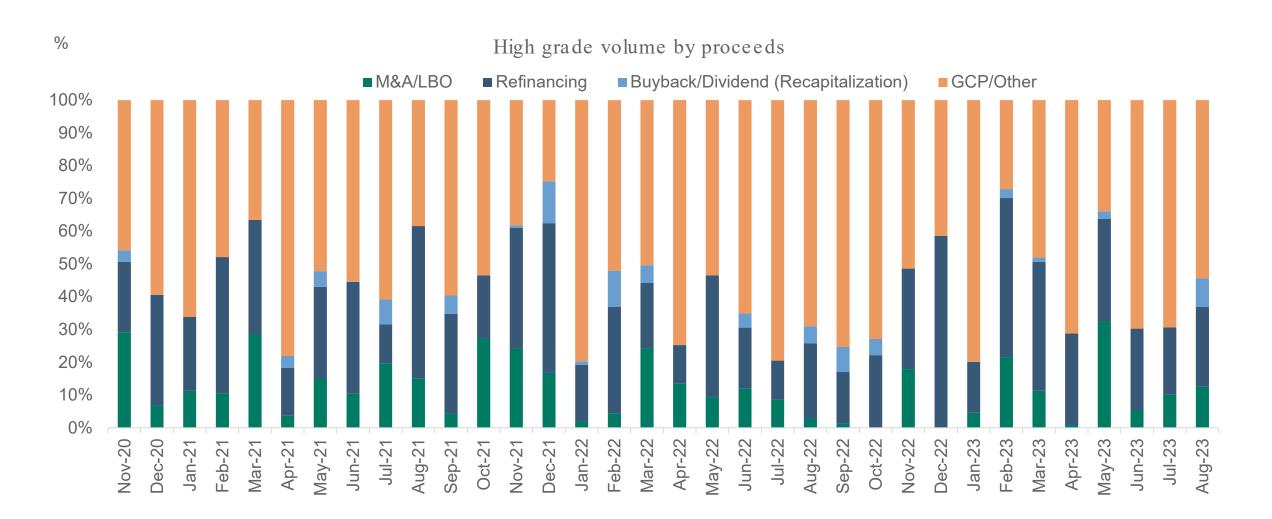
## HY new money primary mix



## Loans new money primary mix

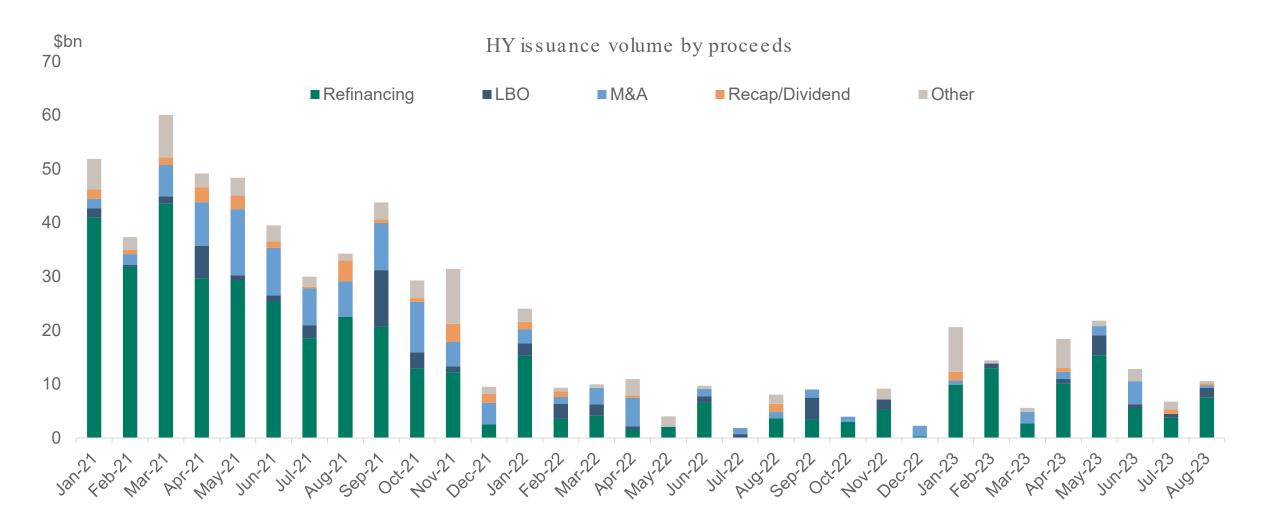


### High grade volume by proceeds

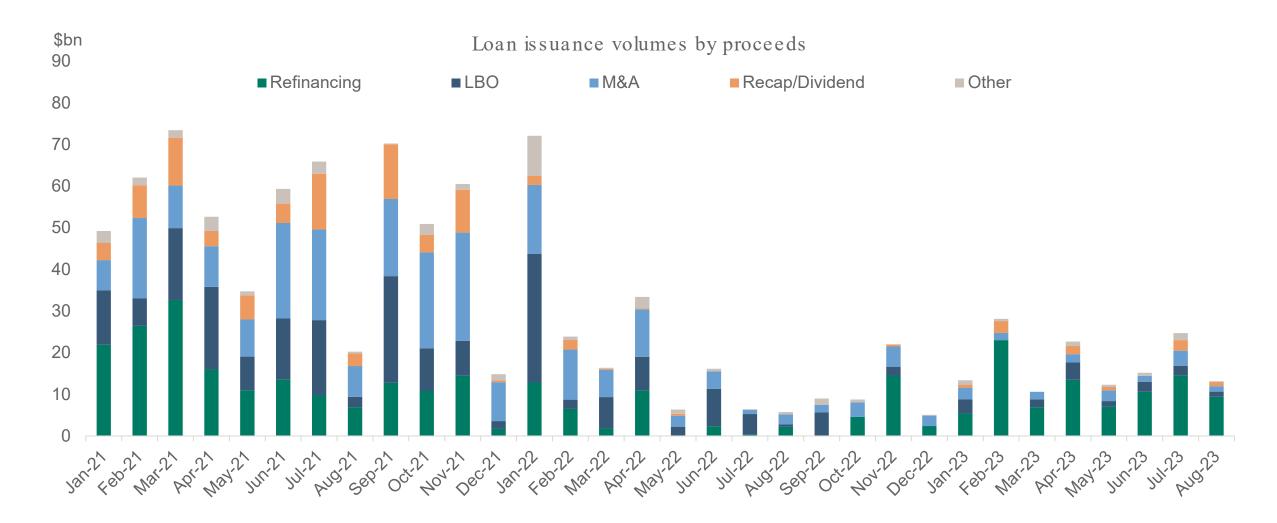


59

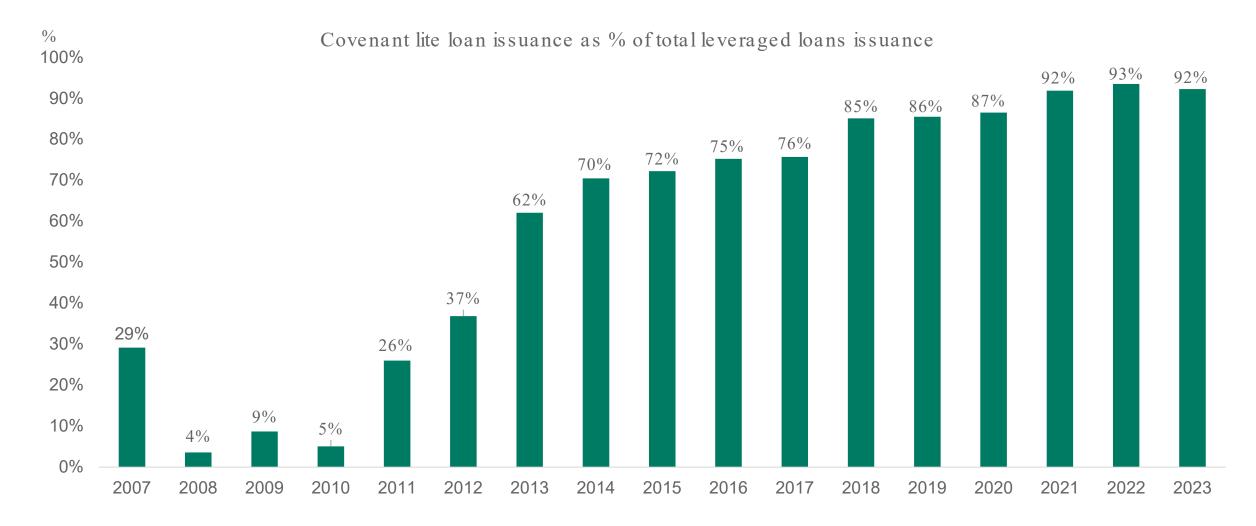
## High yield volumes by proceeds



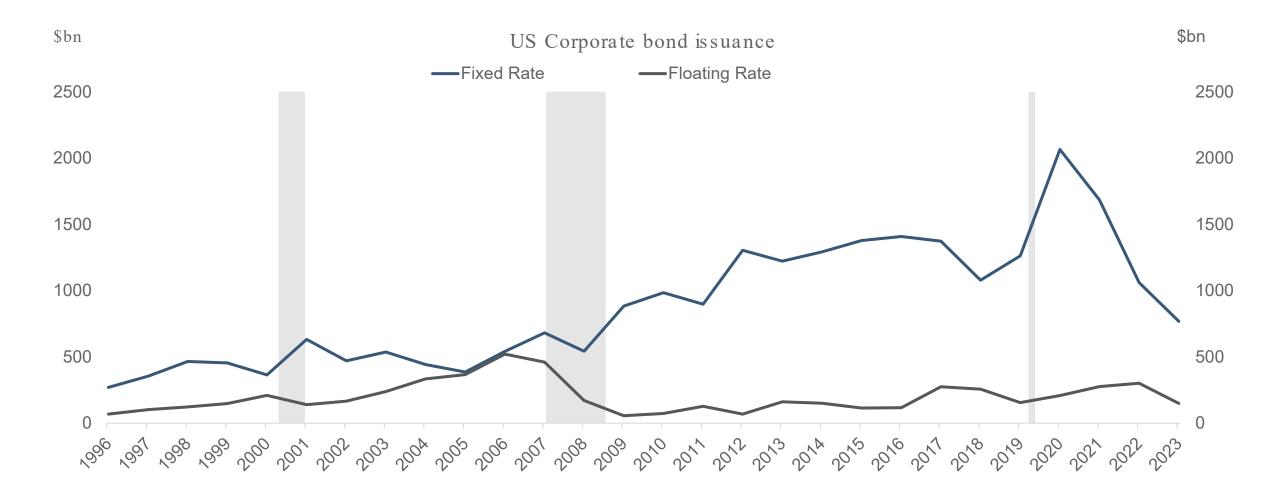
### Loan volumes by proceeds



#### Covenant lite loan issuance

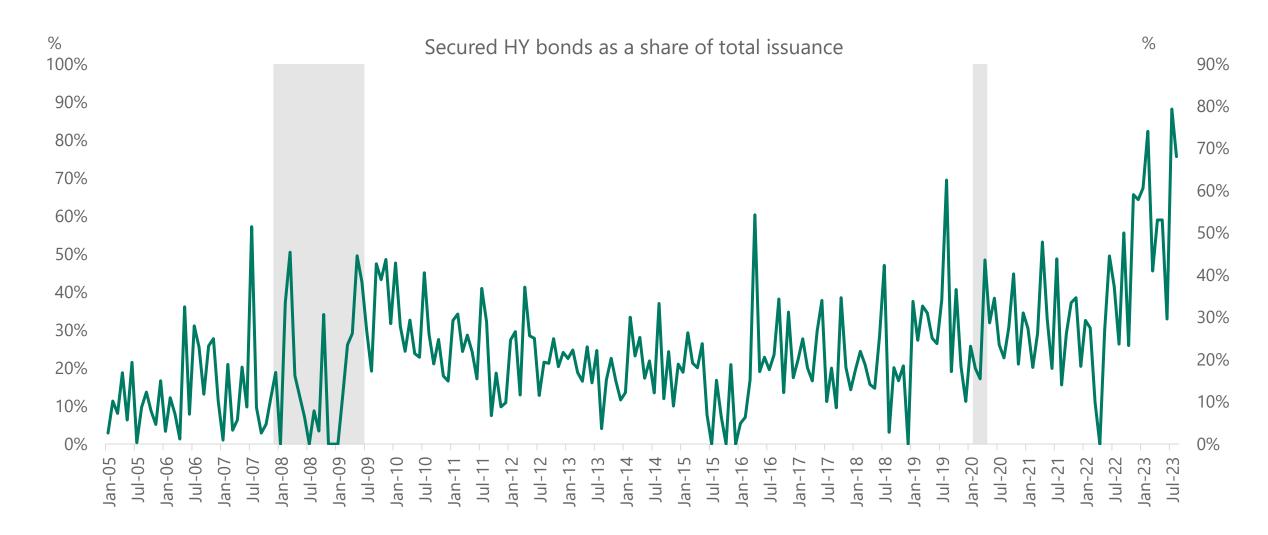


## Corporate bond issuance



Source: SIFMA, Apollo Chief Economist.

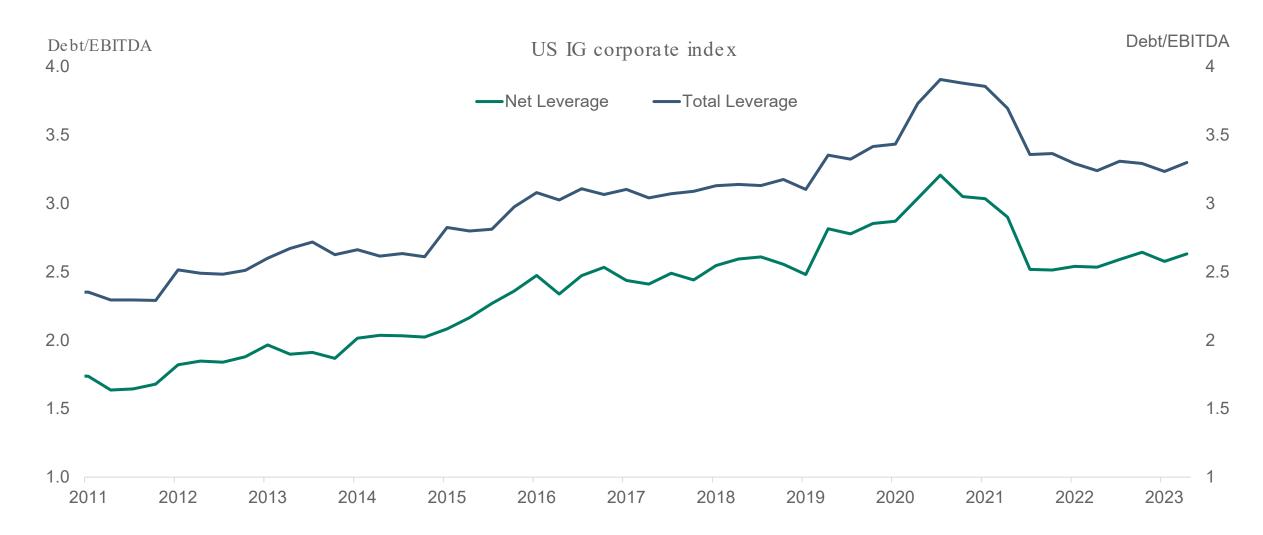
#### Secured HY bond issuance volume



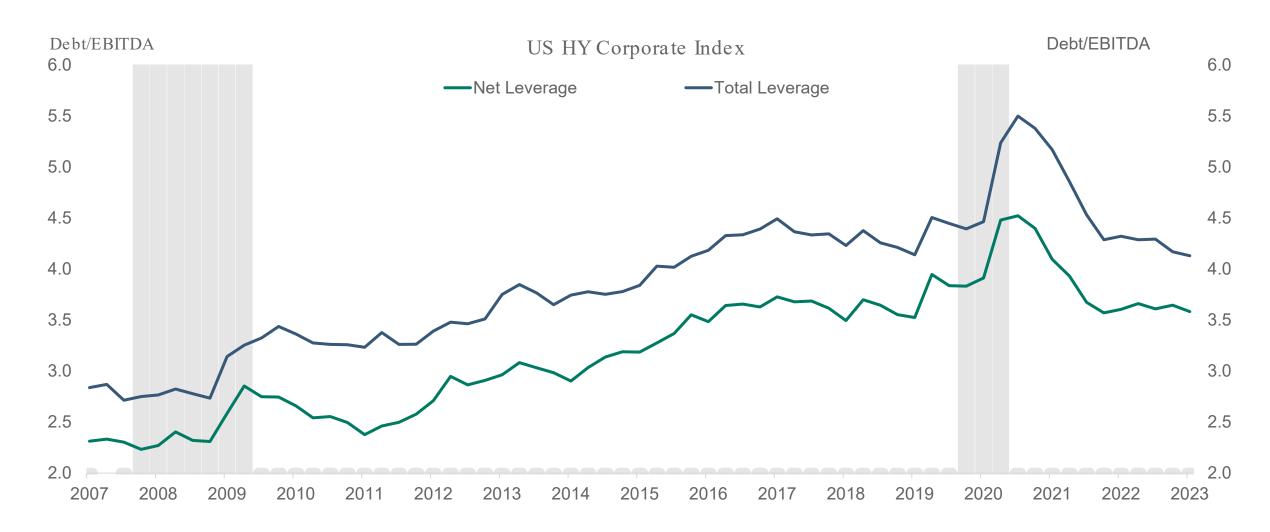
# Credit fundamentals



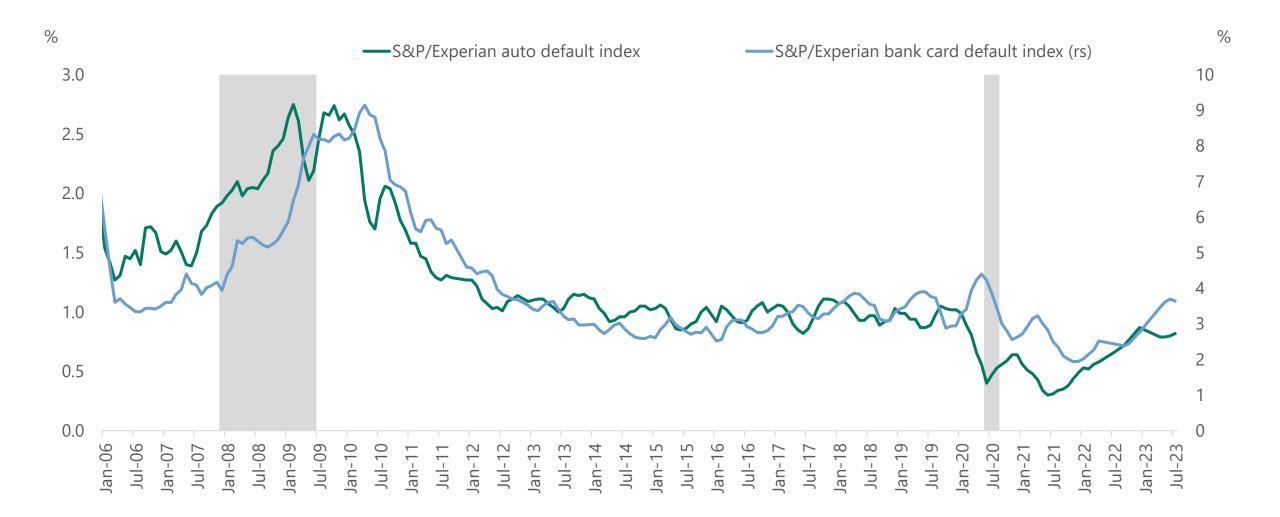
### IG leverage has come down after the pandemic



## High yield leverage has come down after the pandemic

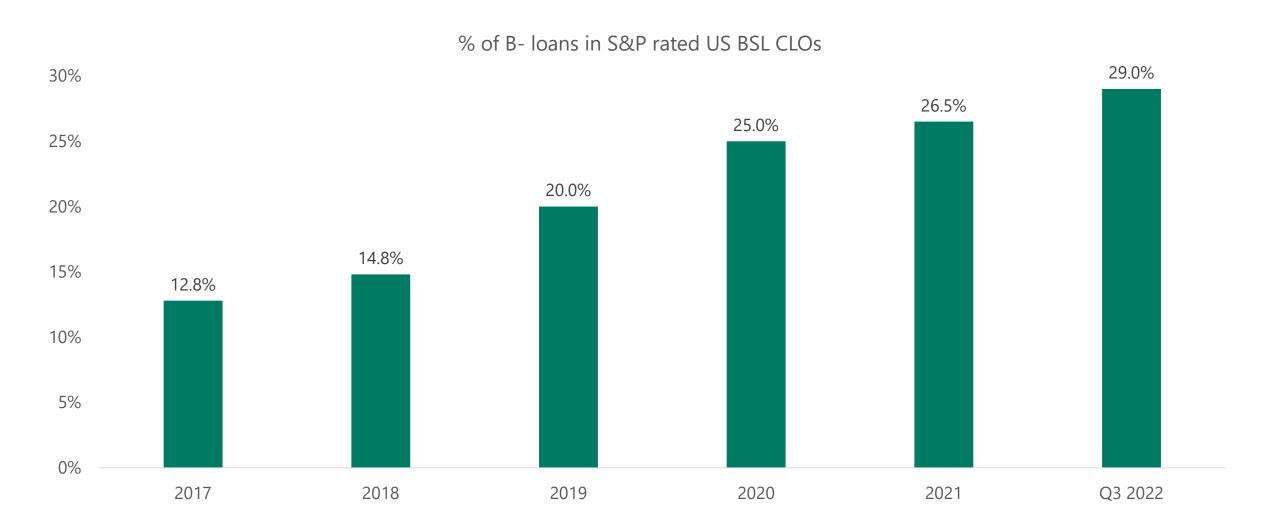


### Default rates for auto loans and credit cards moving higher



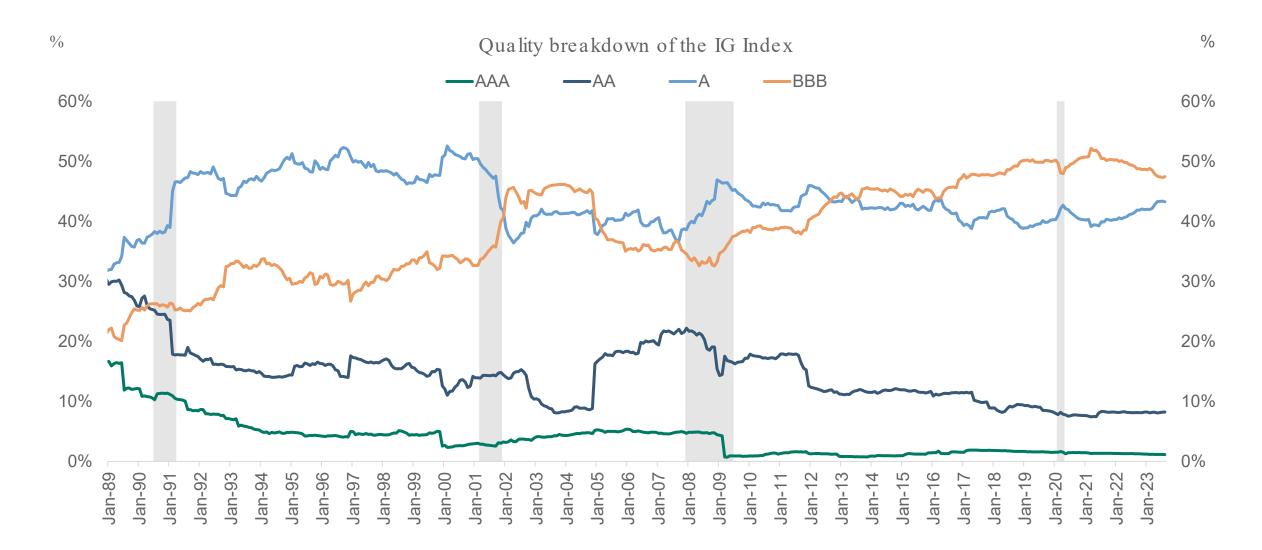
Source: S&P, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist 67

### 29% of the loans in the Morningstar LSTA Leveraged Loan Index are rated B-

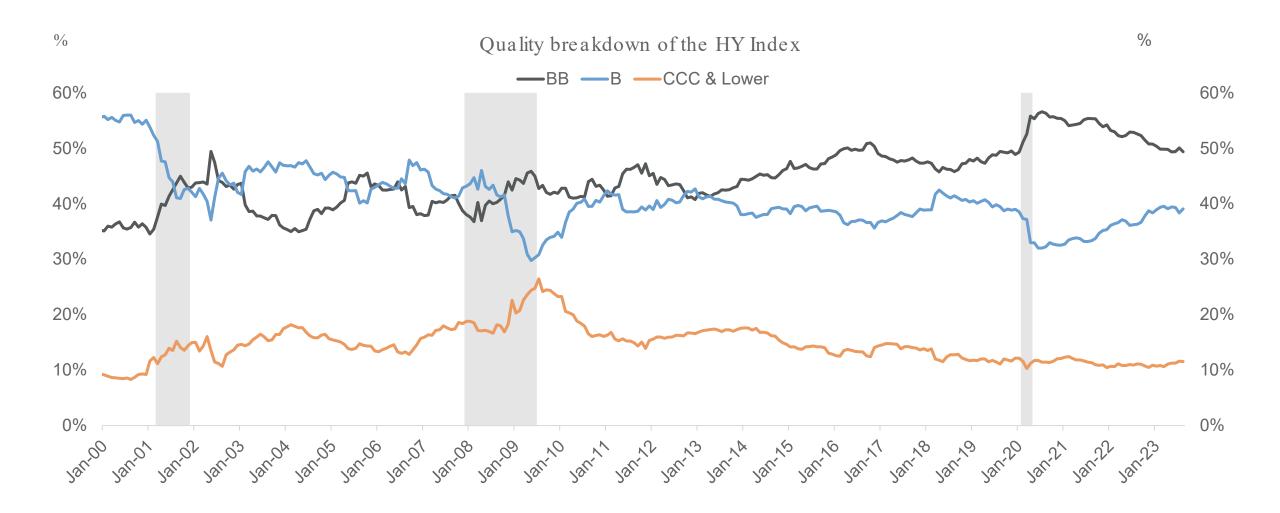


Source: Morningstar, Apollo Chief Economist 68

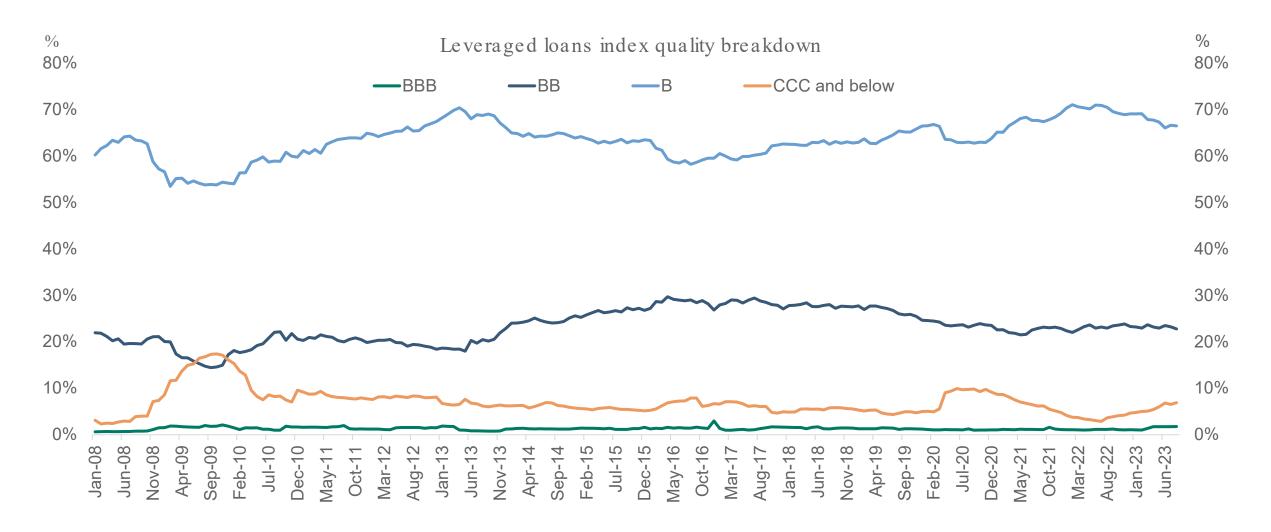
## Quality composition of the IG Index



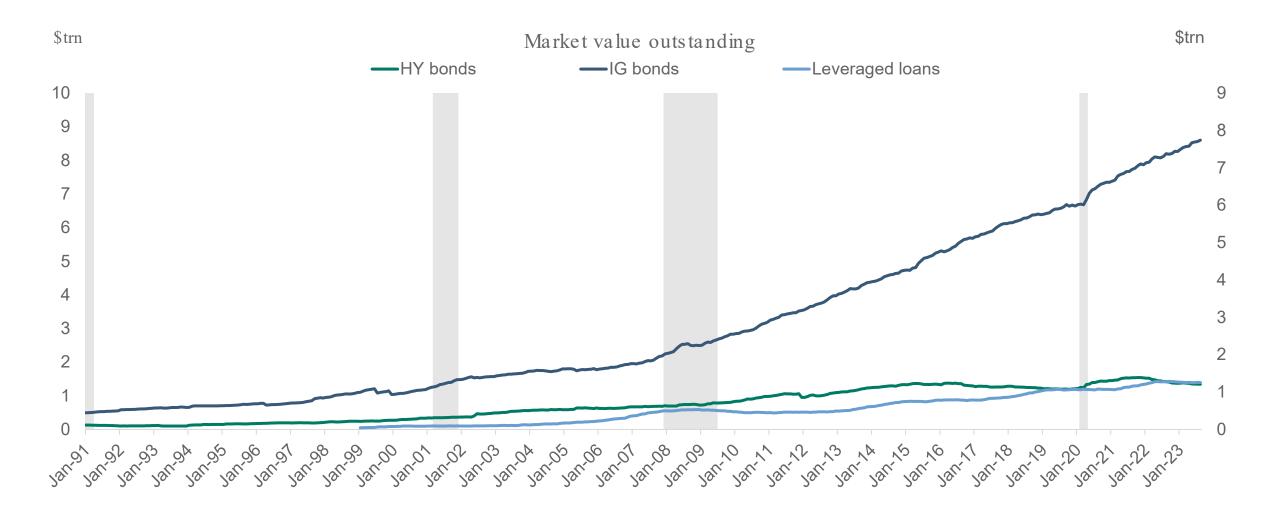
## Quality composition of the HY Index



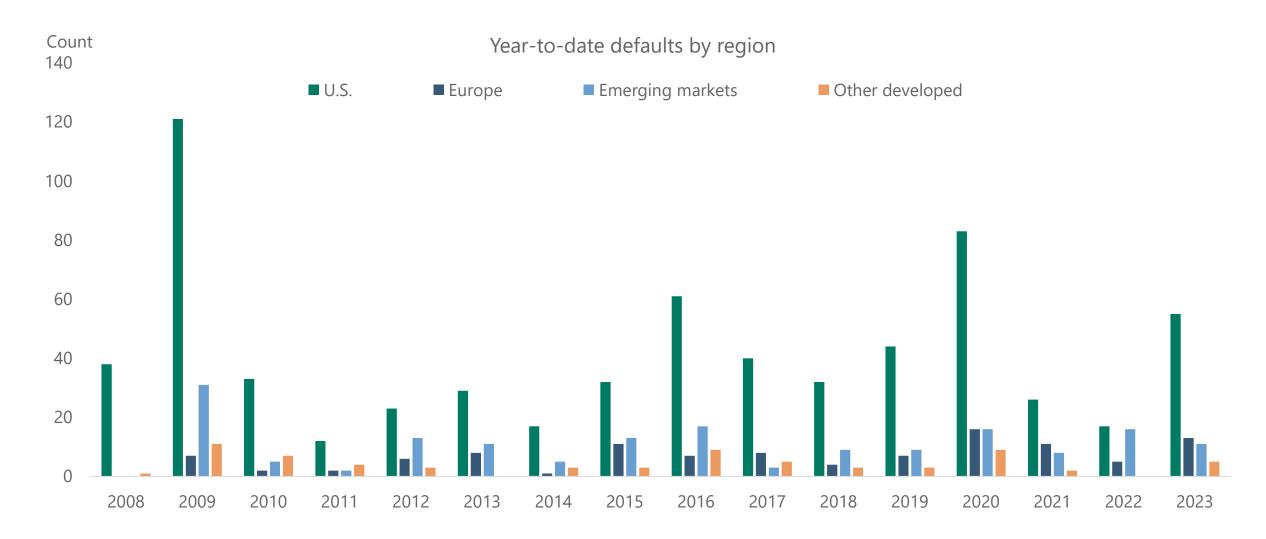
### Quality composition of the leveraged loans index



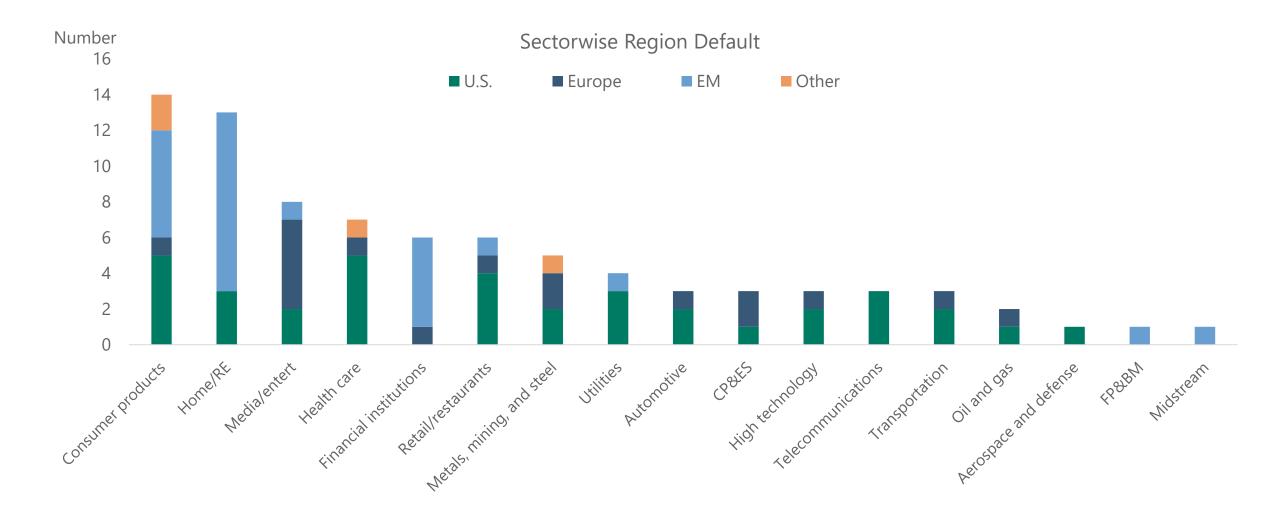
### IG market is eight times bigger than HY and eight times bigger than the loan market



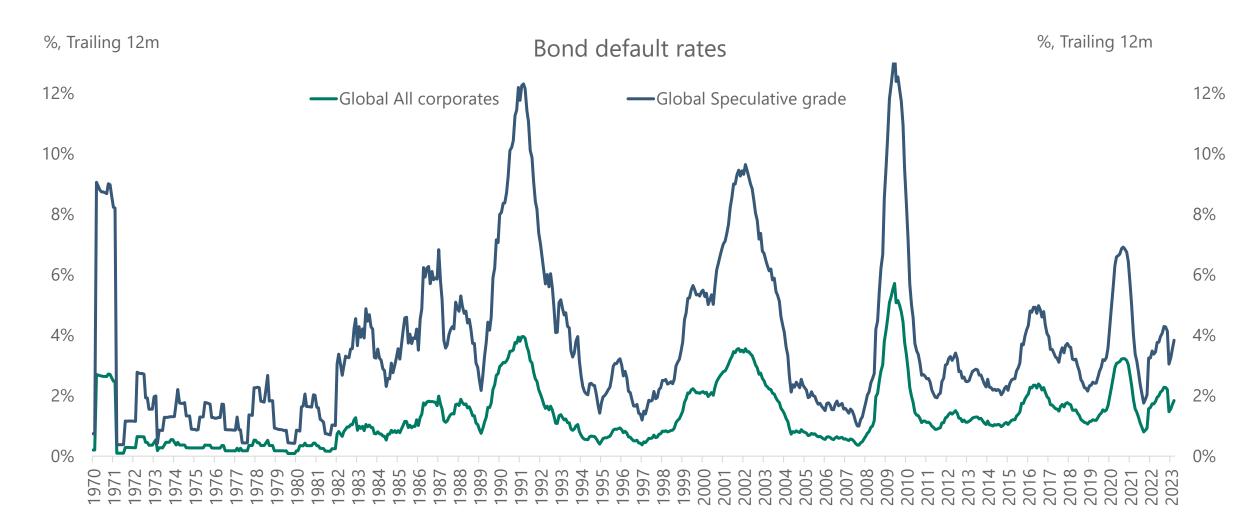
## Global default rates rising in US and Europe



#### Default rates differ across sectors

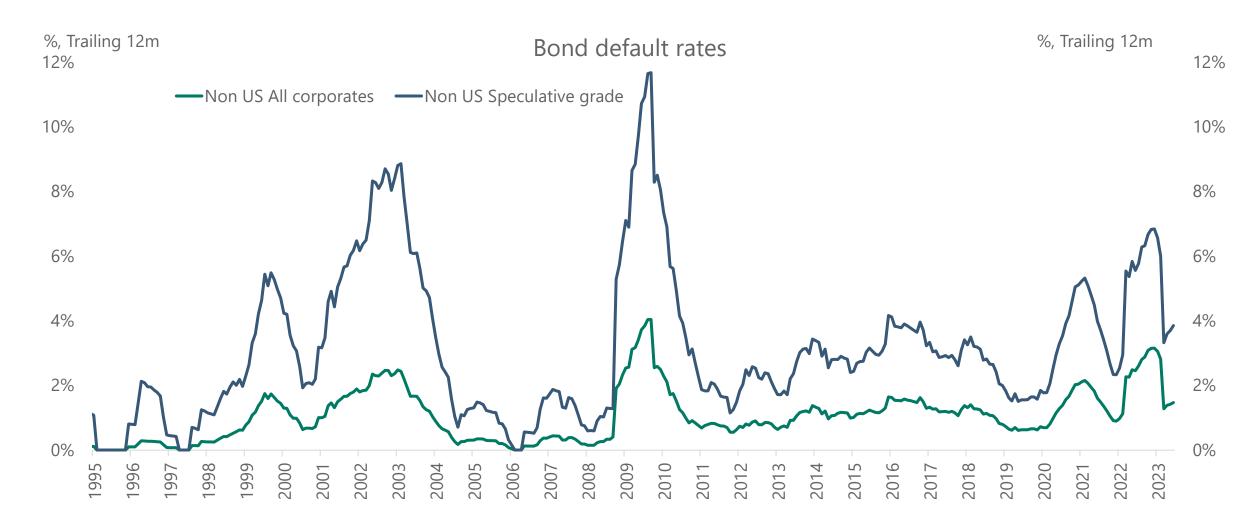


#### Global bond default rates



Source: Moody's Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

#### Non-US bond default rates

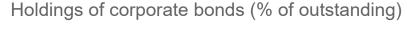


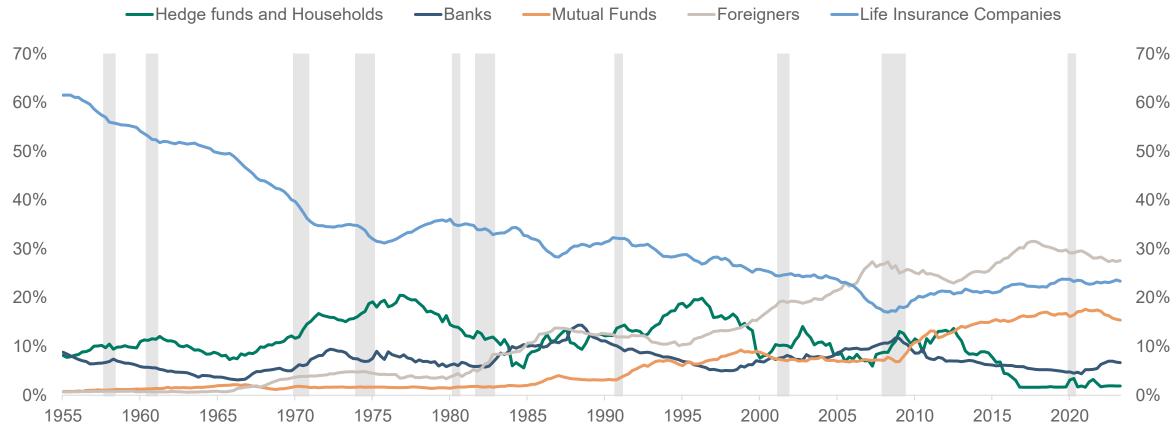
Source: Moody's Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

# Corporate bond holdings



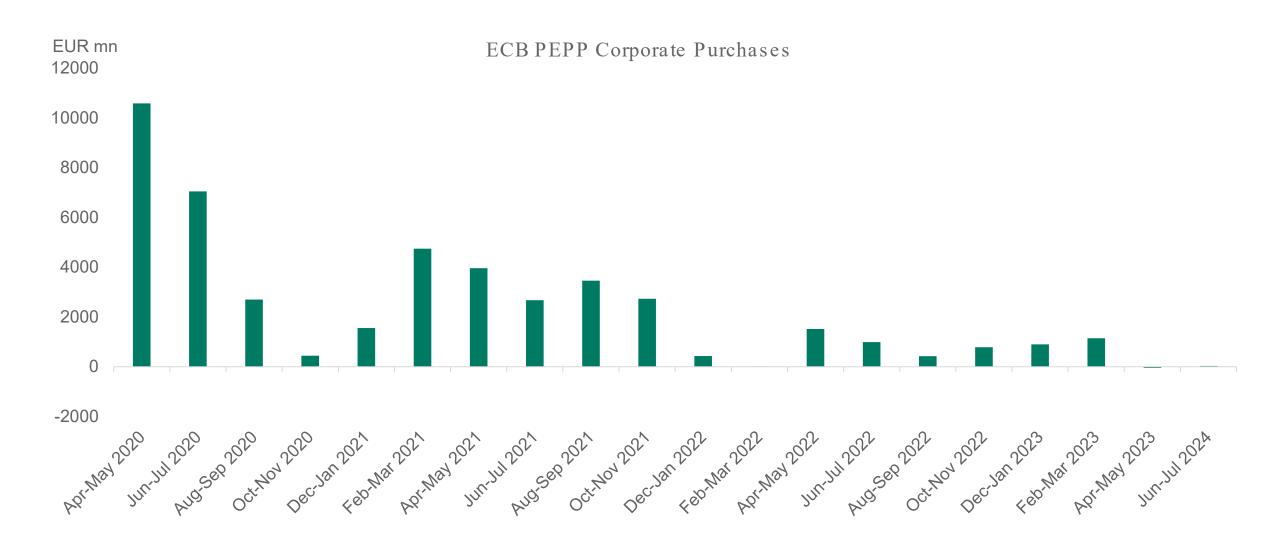
#### The biggest holder of US corporate bonds is foreigners





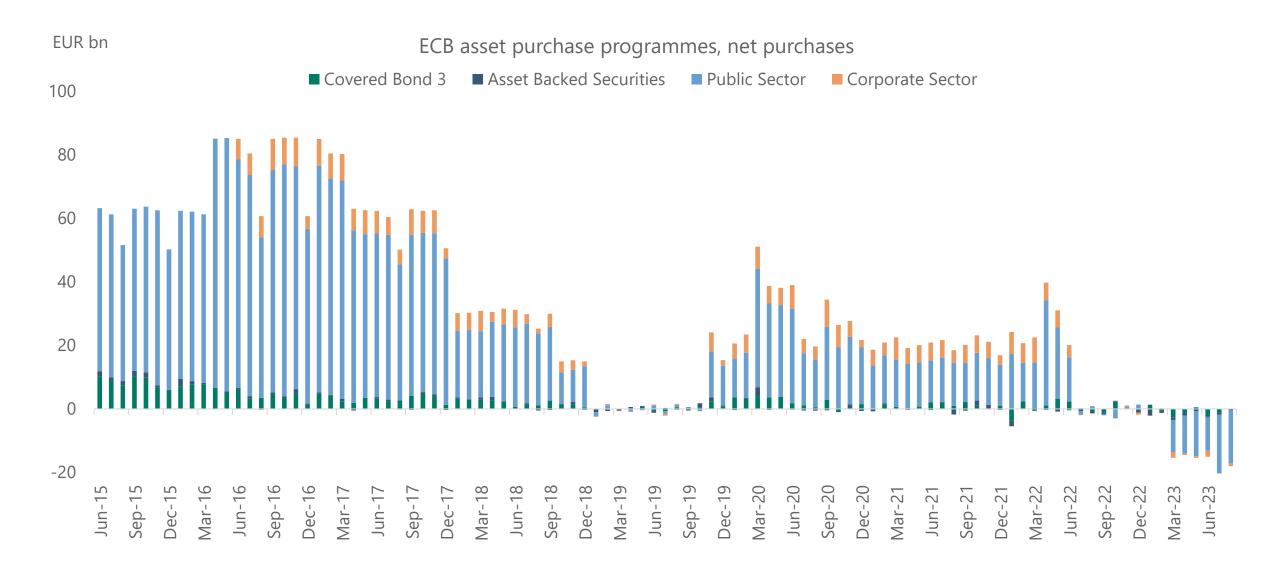
Source: FRB, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

#### ECB purchases of corporate bonds



Source: ECB, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

#### ECB doing QT



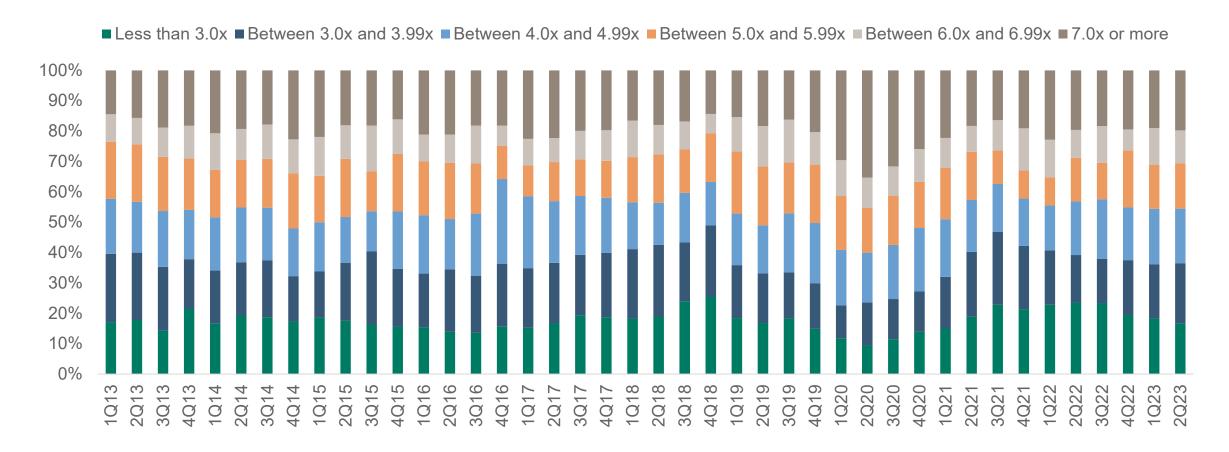
Source: ECB, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

Loans/CLOs



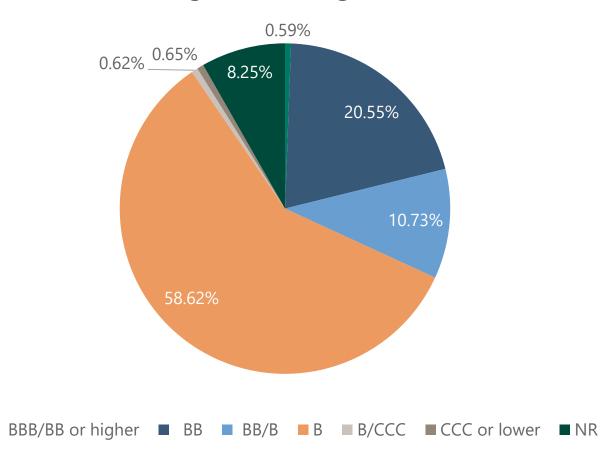
#### Leveraged loan deals, by multiple

#### Share of leveraged deals

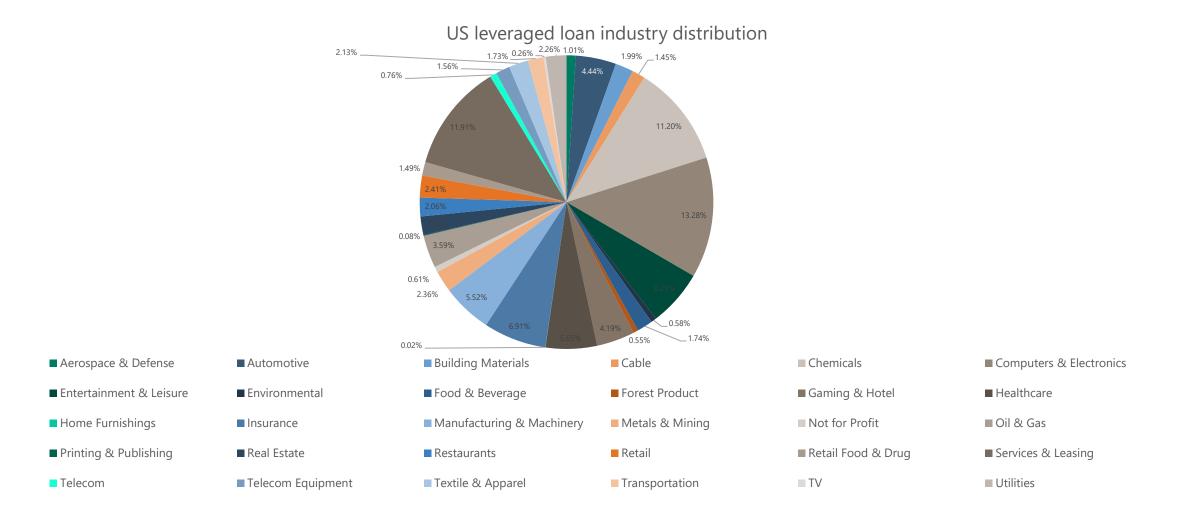


#### Leveraged loans rating distribution, 2023Q2

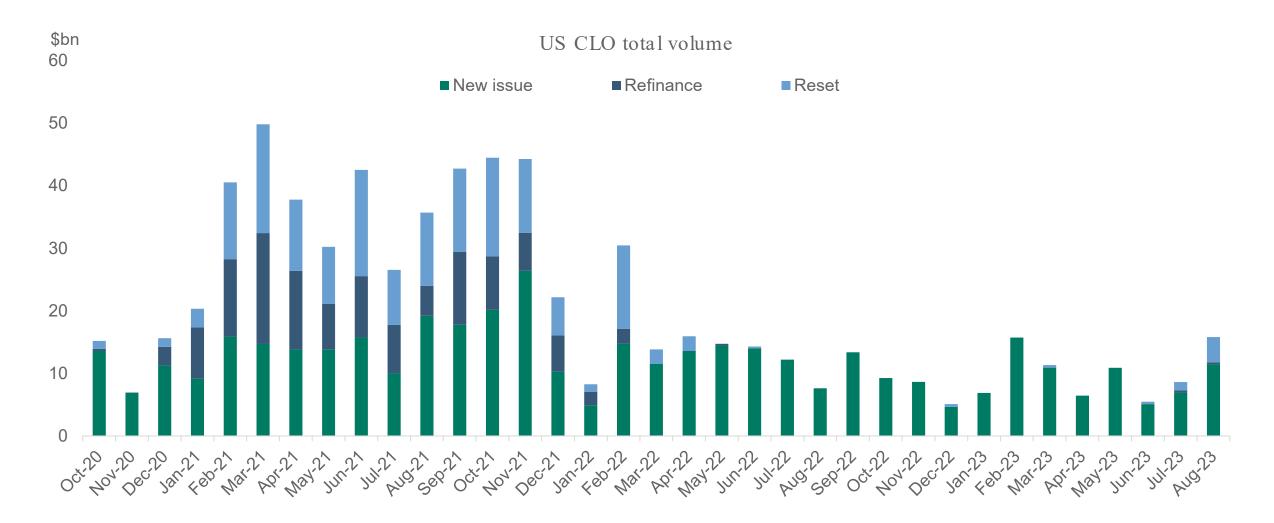
#### US leveraged loan rating distribution



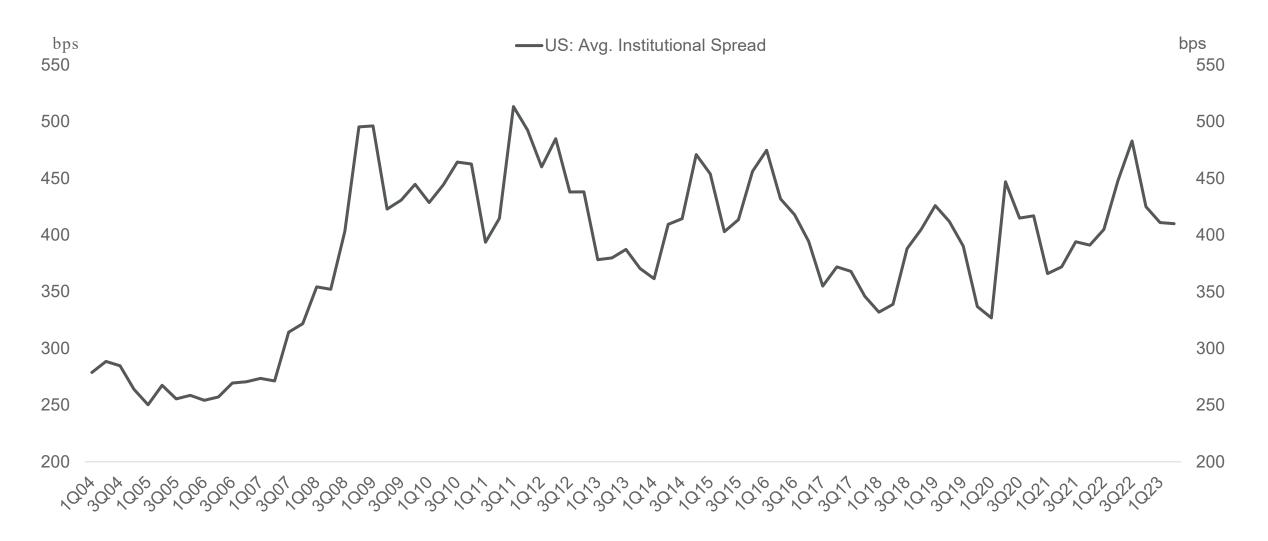
## Leveraged loans distribution, by industry, 2023Q2



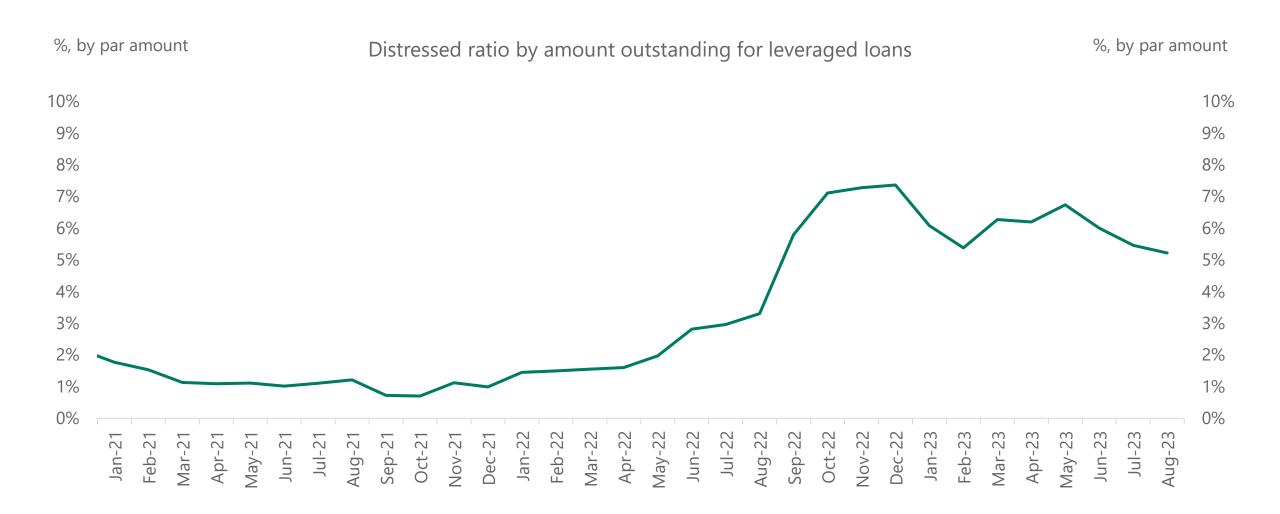
#### US CLO total volume



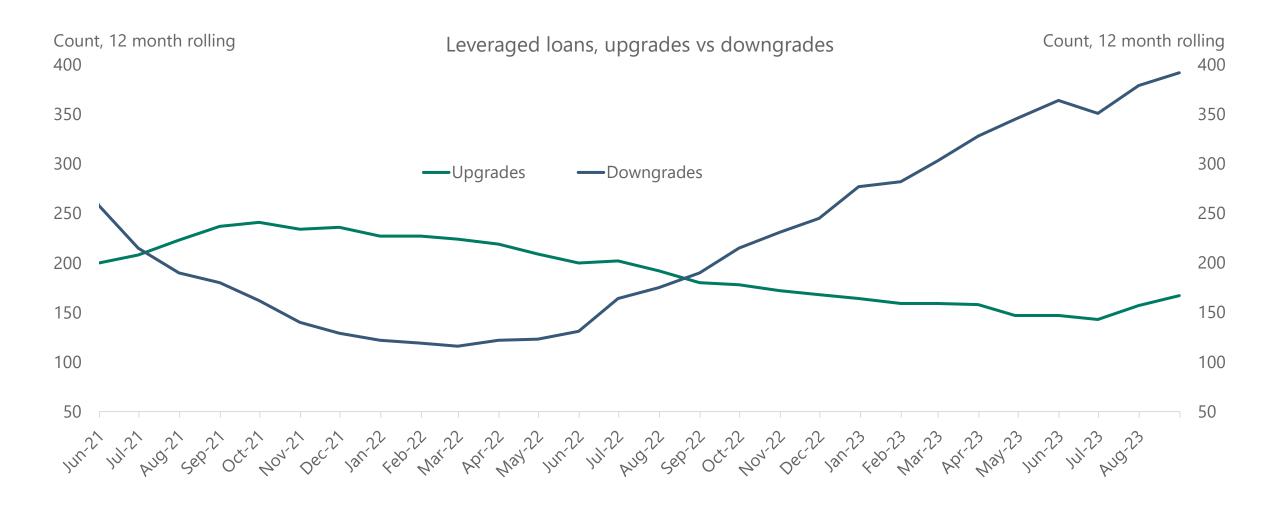
#### Loans: Institutional spread relative to bespoke loans



#### Distressed ratio for leveraged loans has risen



#### Downgrades are rising

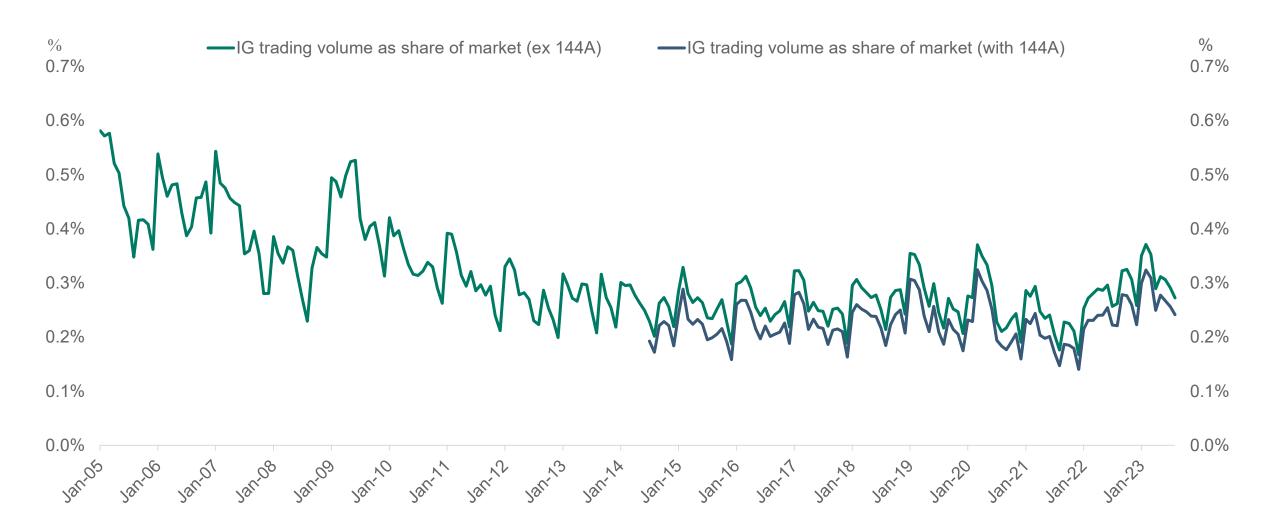


Source: Pitchbook LCD

Liquidity in US credit markets

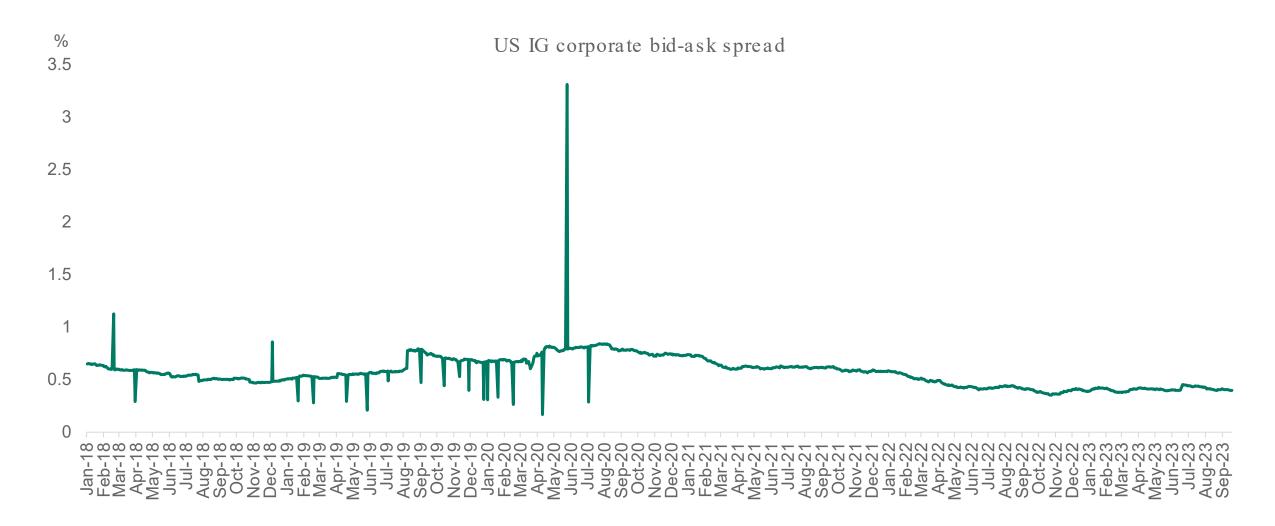


### IG trading liquidity

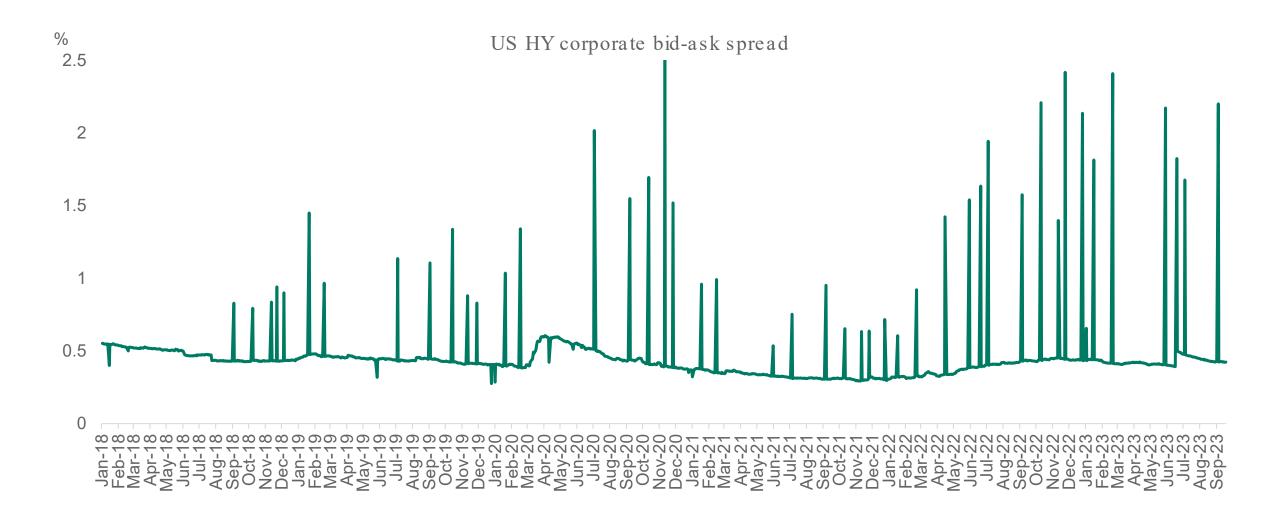


Source: ICE BofA, FINRA TRACE, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

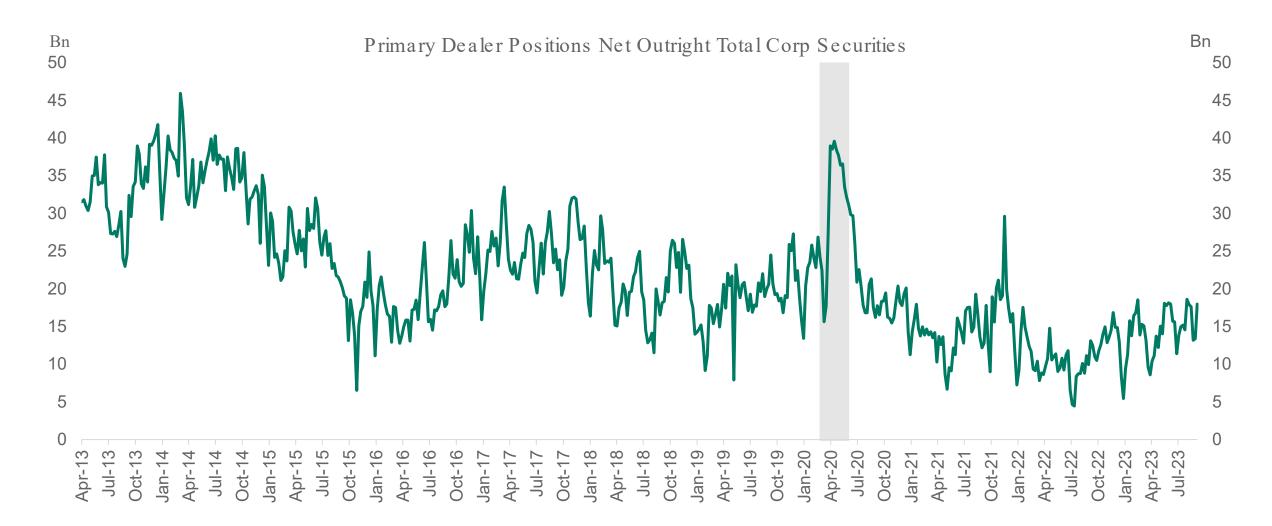
#### Bid-ask spread for US IG



#### Bid-ask spread for US HY

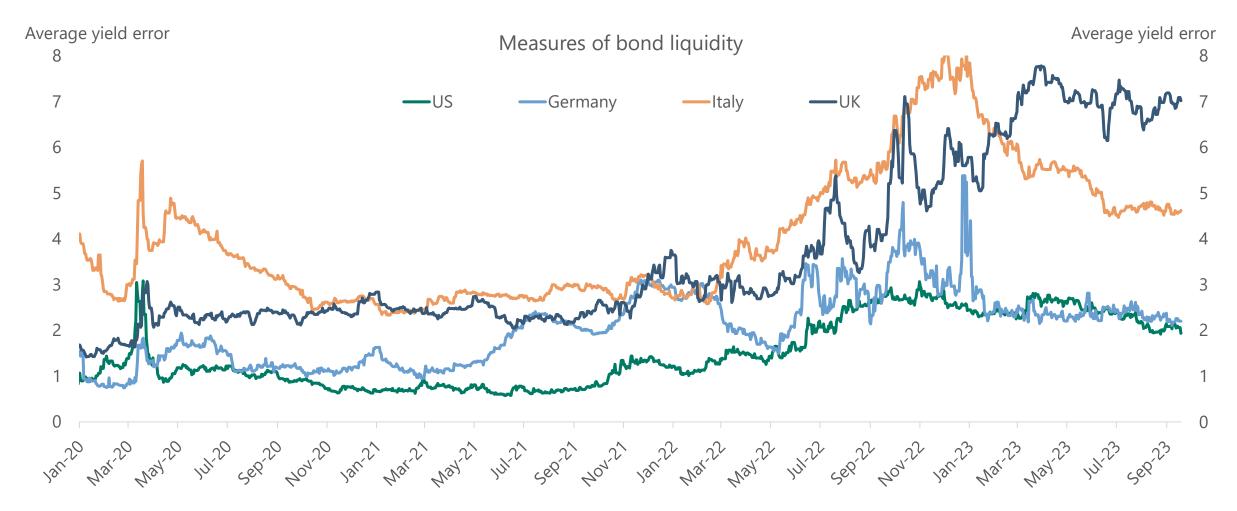


#### Dealer inventory of corporate bonds (IG+HY)



Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

## Liquidity deteriorating in UK bond market

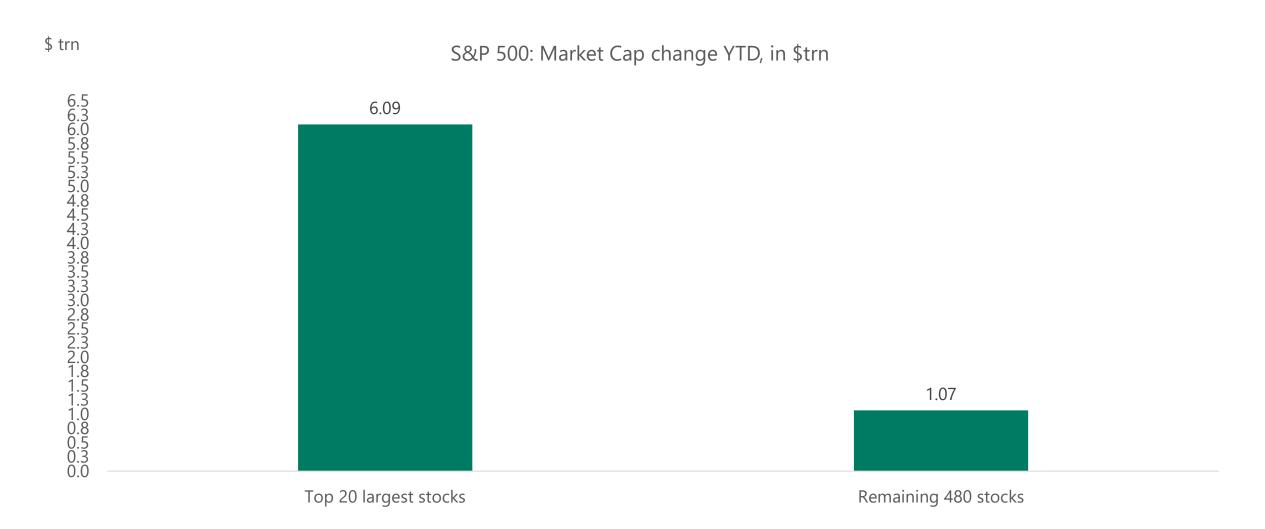


Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist. Note: The index displays the average yield error across the universe of government notes and bonds with remaining maturity 1-year or greater, based off the intra-day Bloomberg relative value curve fitter. When liquidity conditions are favorable the average yield error are small as any dislocations from fair values are normalized within a short time frame. Average yield error is defined as an aggregate measure for dislocations in Treasury securities across the curve.

## Market technicals

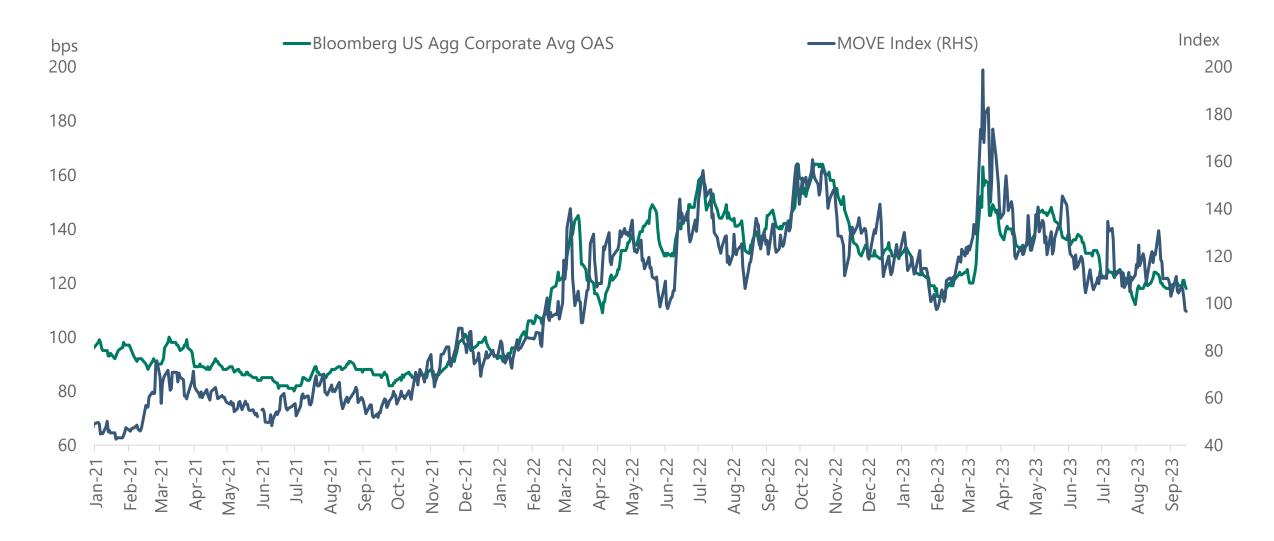


#### Not a broad-based rally in the S&P500



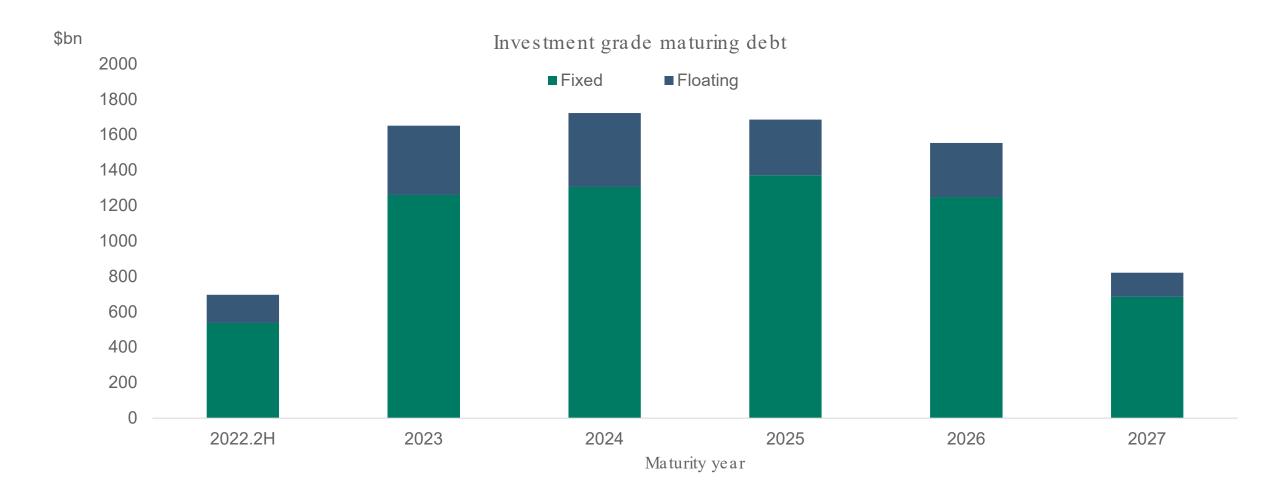
Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist.

## US IG spread highly correlated with implied rates vol

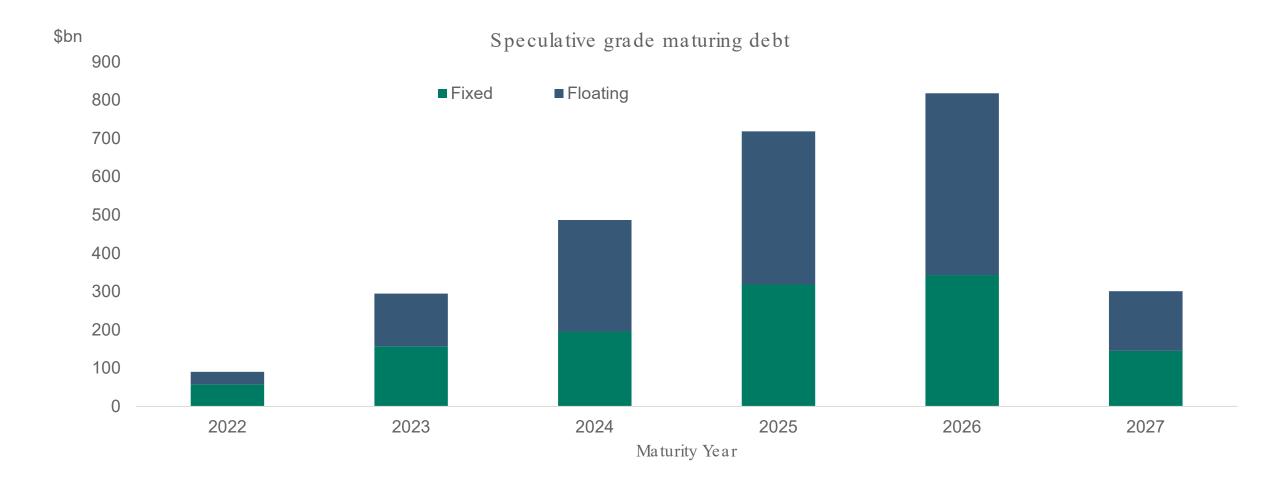


Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

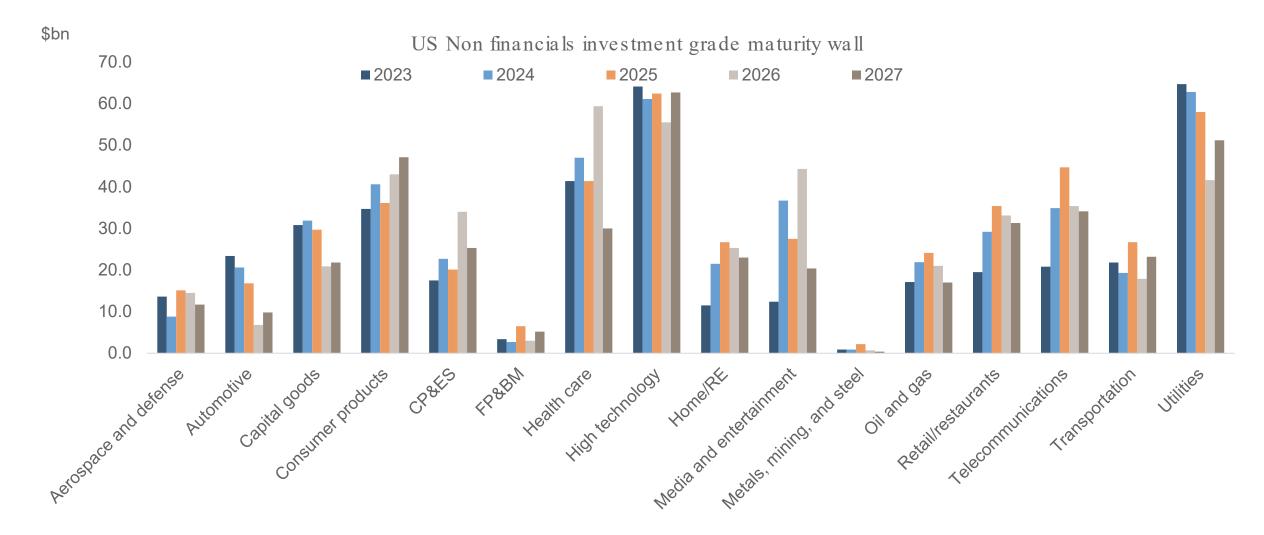
## Investment grade maturity wall



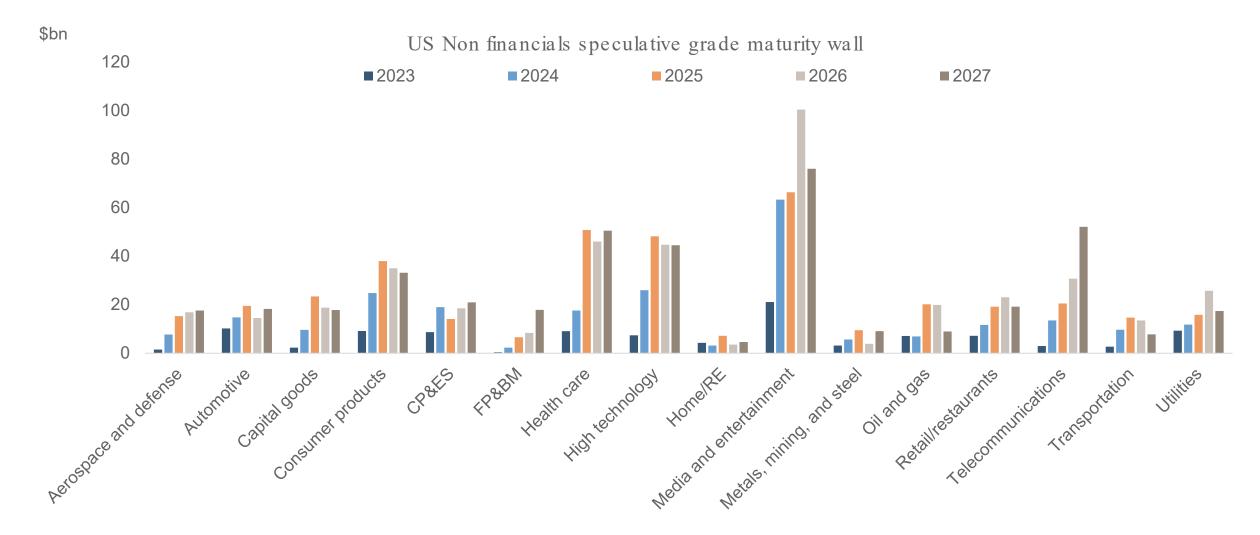
## High yield maturity wall



#### IG: US Non financials maturity wall



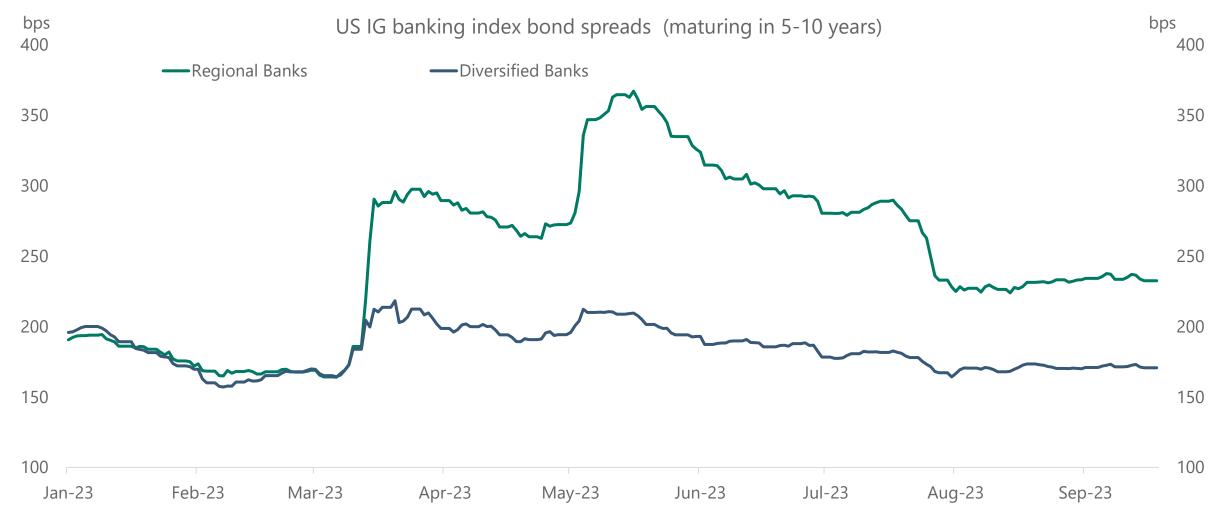
#### HY: US Non financials maturity wall



# Regional banks

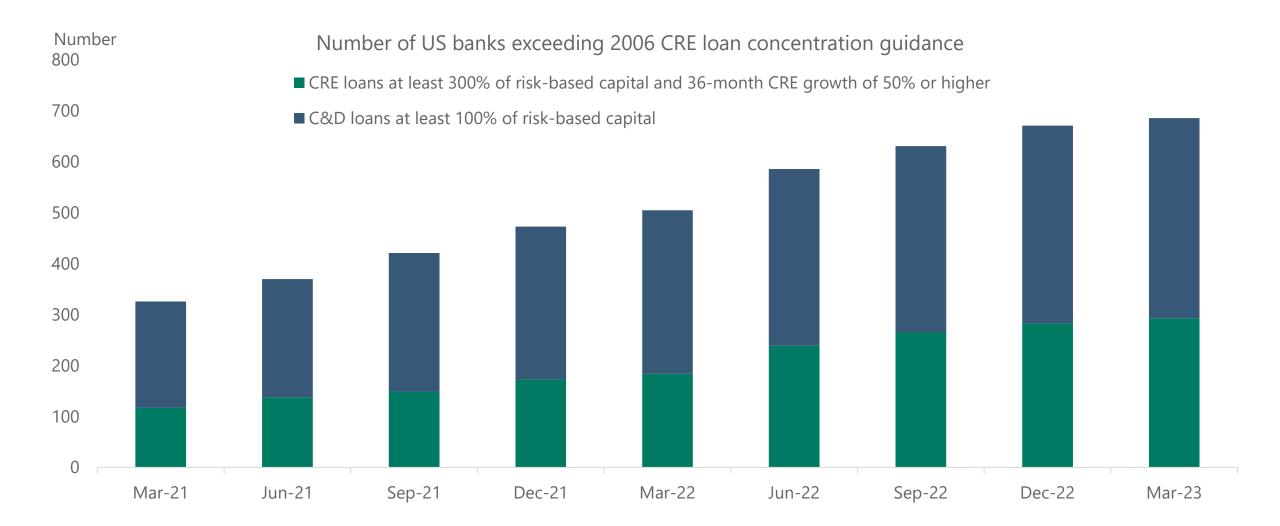


#### Regional bank spreads still wide

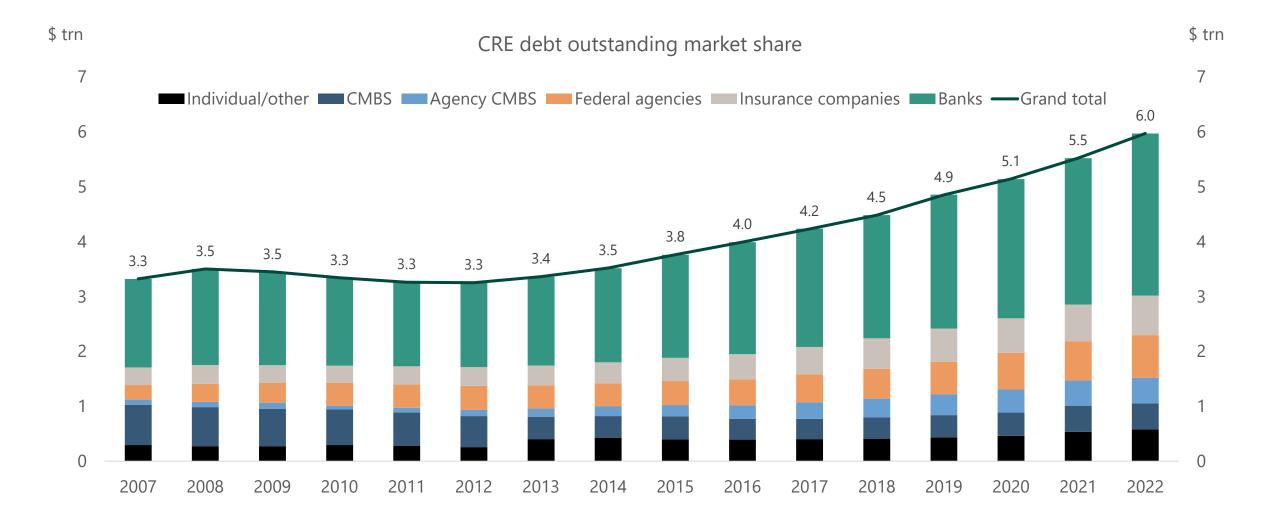


Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist. Note: Unweighted average spreads of bonds from ICE 5-10 Year US Banking Index, C6PX Index for bonds issued before 1st Jan 2023. There are 8 banks in the Regional index and 41 banks in the Diversified index, and Regional banks include BankUnited Inc, Citizens Financial Group, Huntington Bancshares Incorporated, Regions Financial Corporation, Truist Financial Corporation, Webster Financial Corp, Wintrust Financial Corp, Zions, and Diversified banks includes JP Morgan, Citibank, Bank of America, etc

#### Almost 700 US banks exceed the 2006 CRE loan concentration guidance

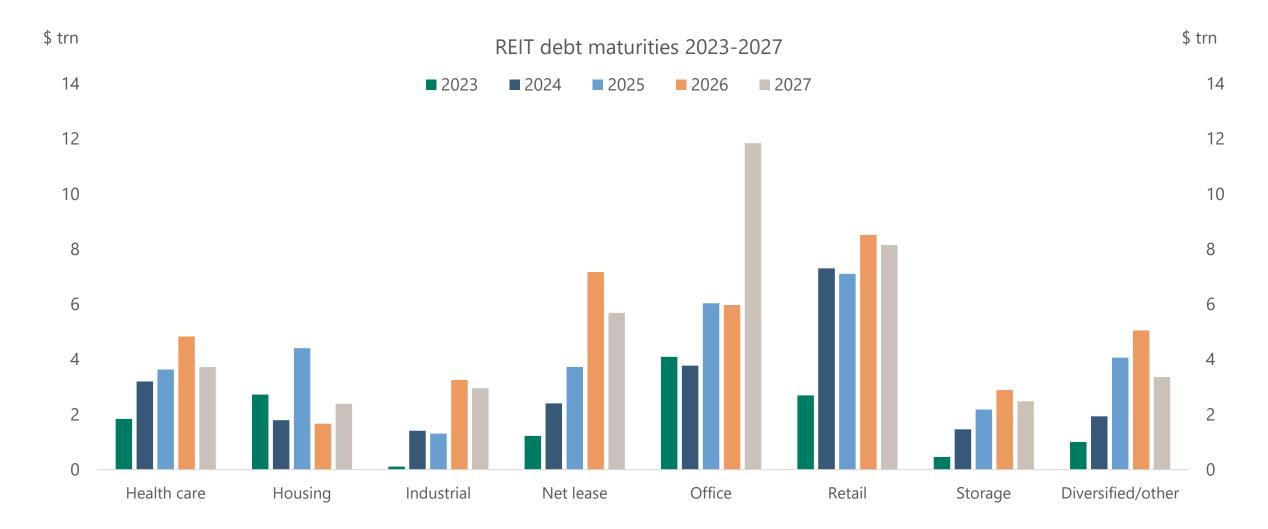


#### US banks account for the bulk of CRE lending



Source: S&P Capital IQ, Apollo Chief Economist

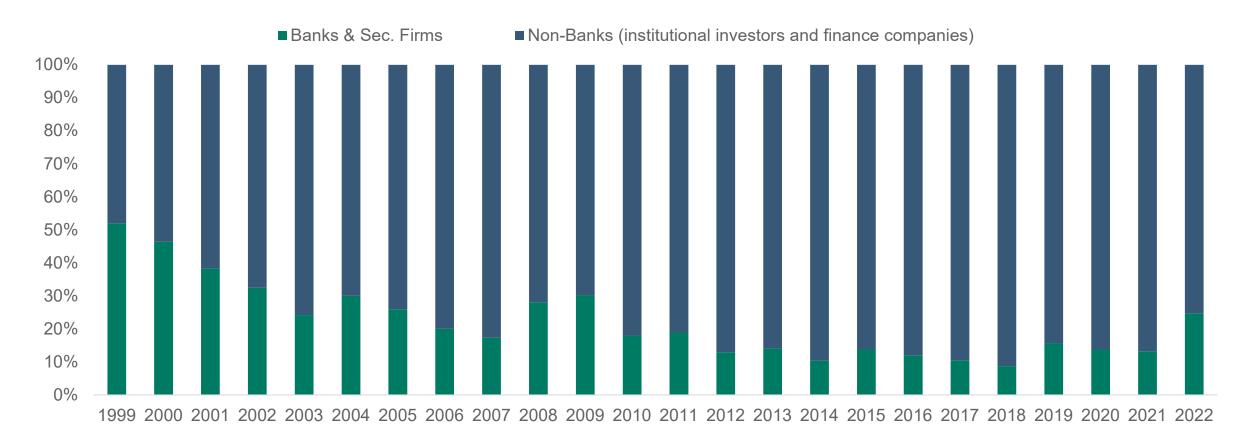
### U.S. REITs hold approximately \$14 billion of debt maturing this year



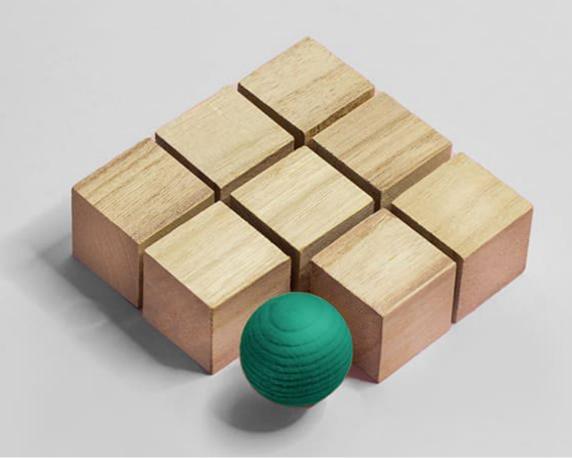
Source: S&P Capital IQ, Apollo Chief Economist

#### More leveraged loans are held by banks

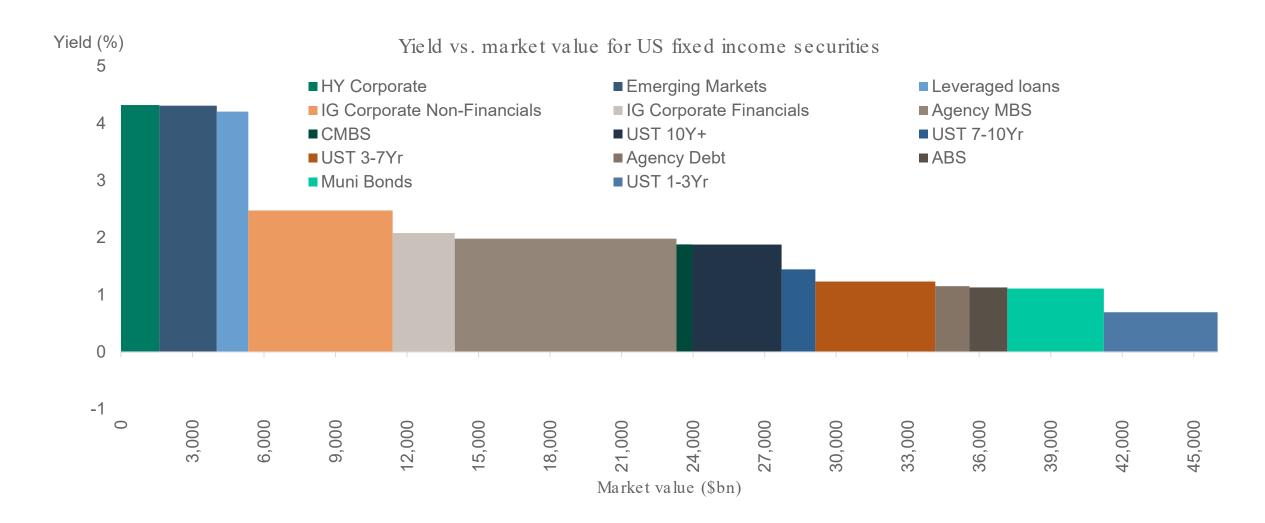
#### Primary investor market: leveraged loans



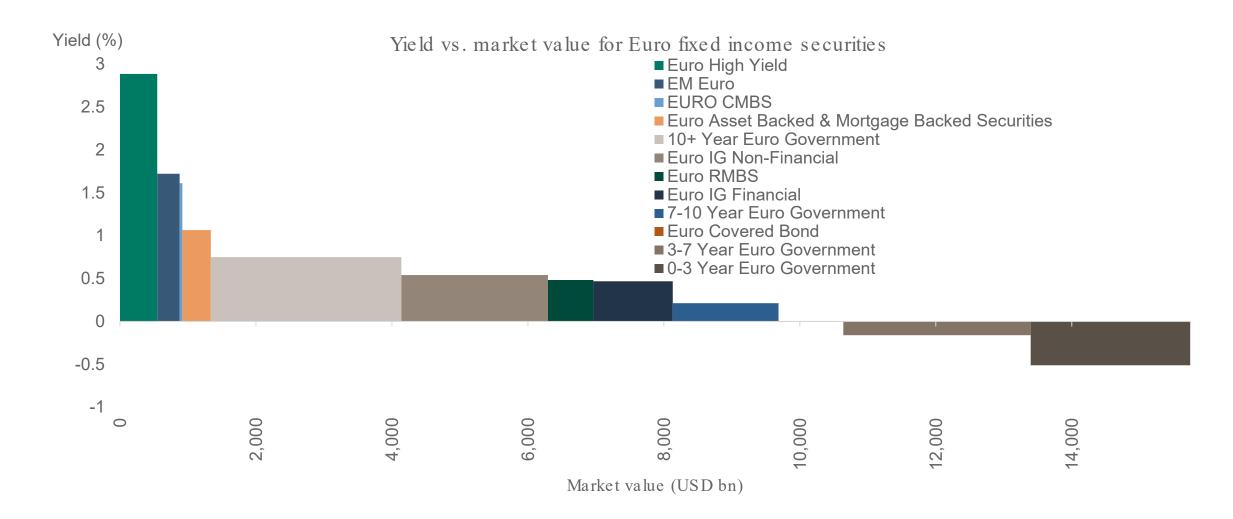
Credit markets in a broader perspective



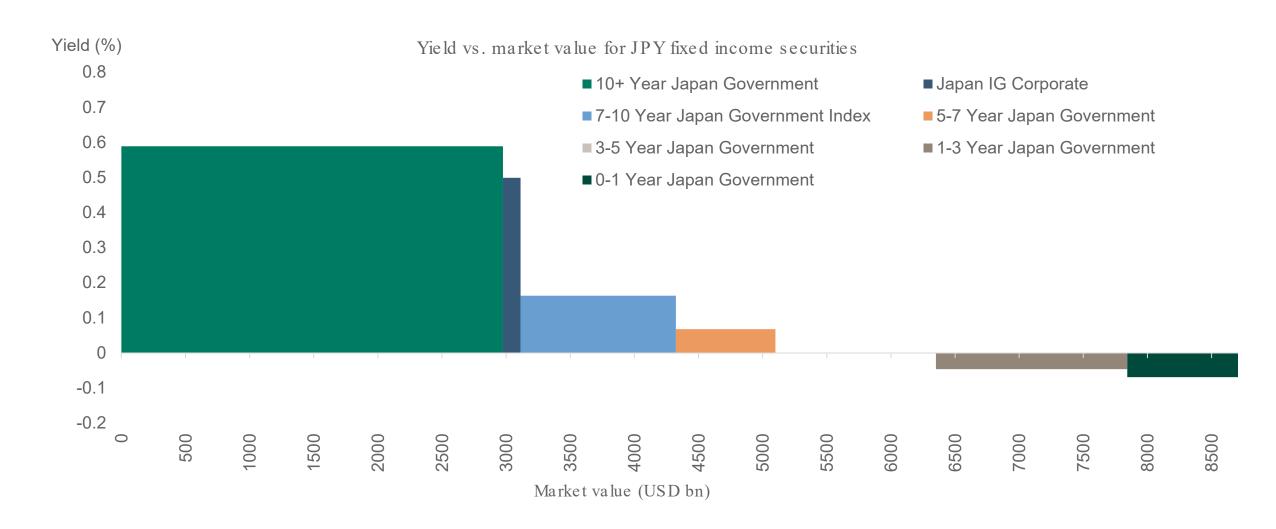
#### US fixed income markets by yield and size



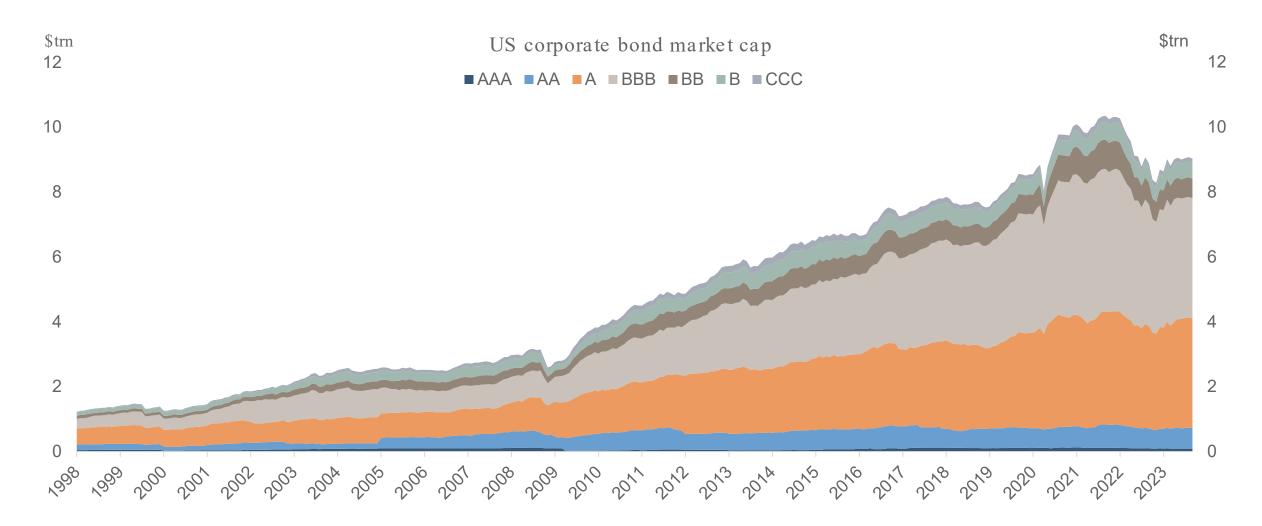
#### European fixed income markets by yield and size



#### Japanese fixed income markets by yield and size

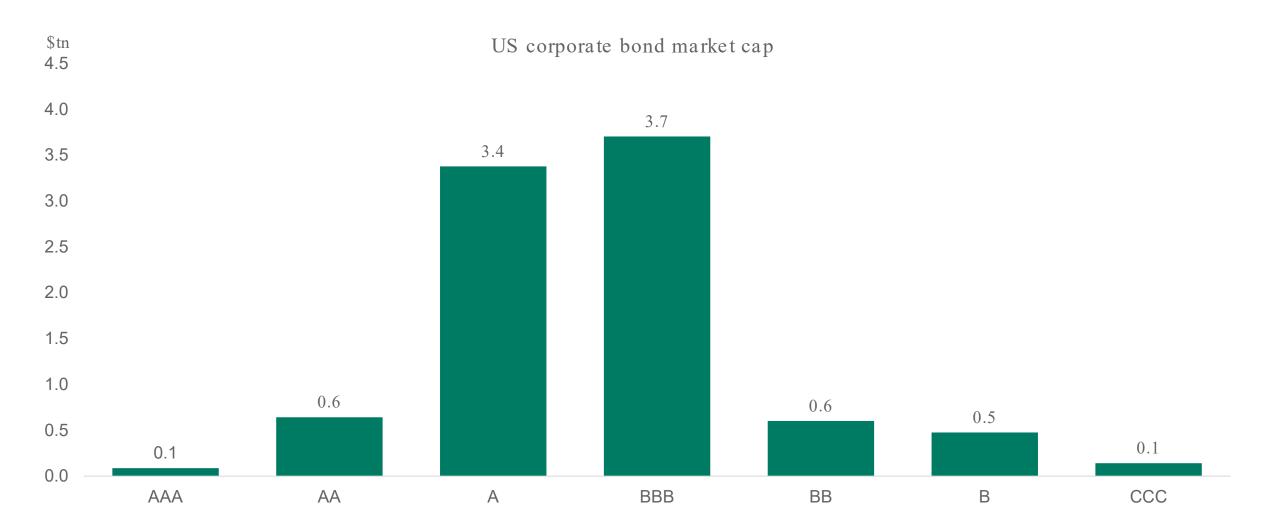


## Total market cap of US corporate bond markets: \$9trn

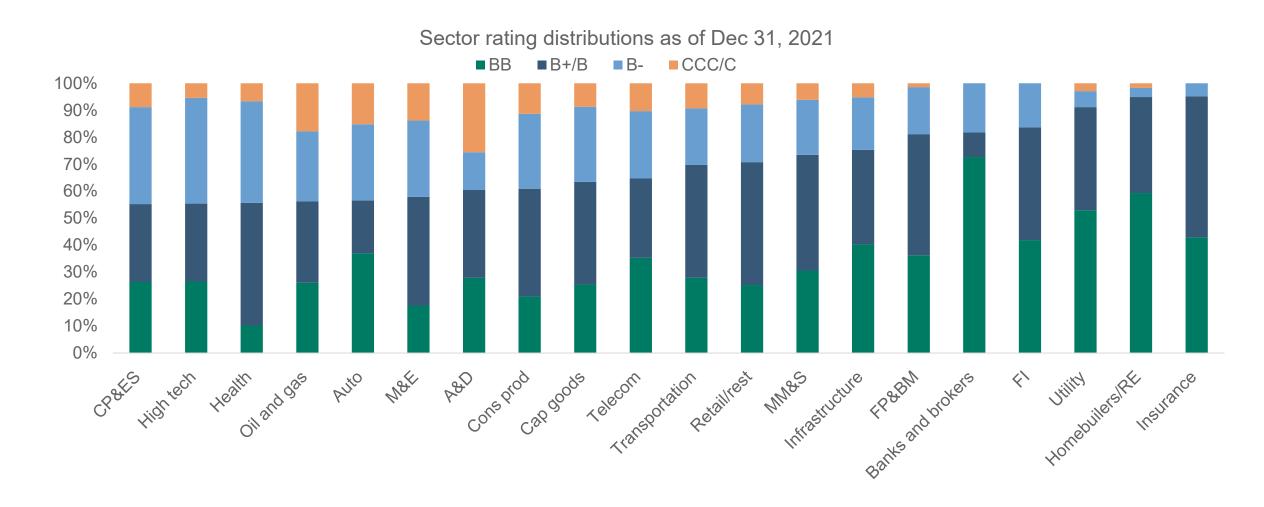


112

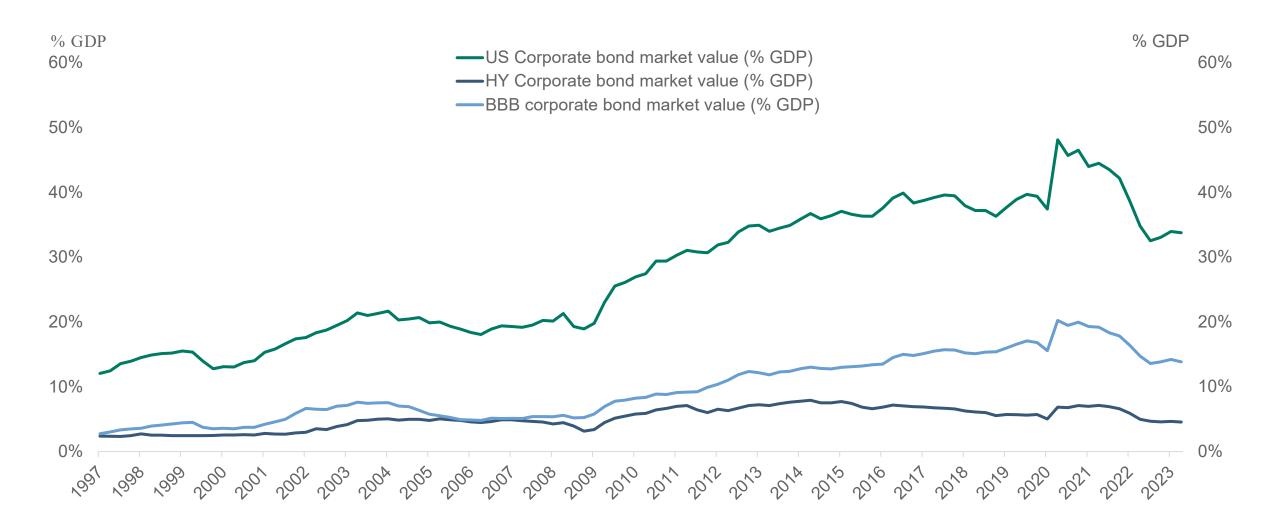
# Corporate bond market cap, by rating



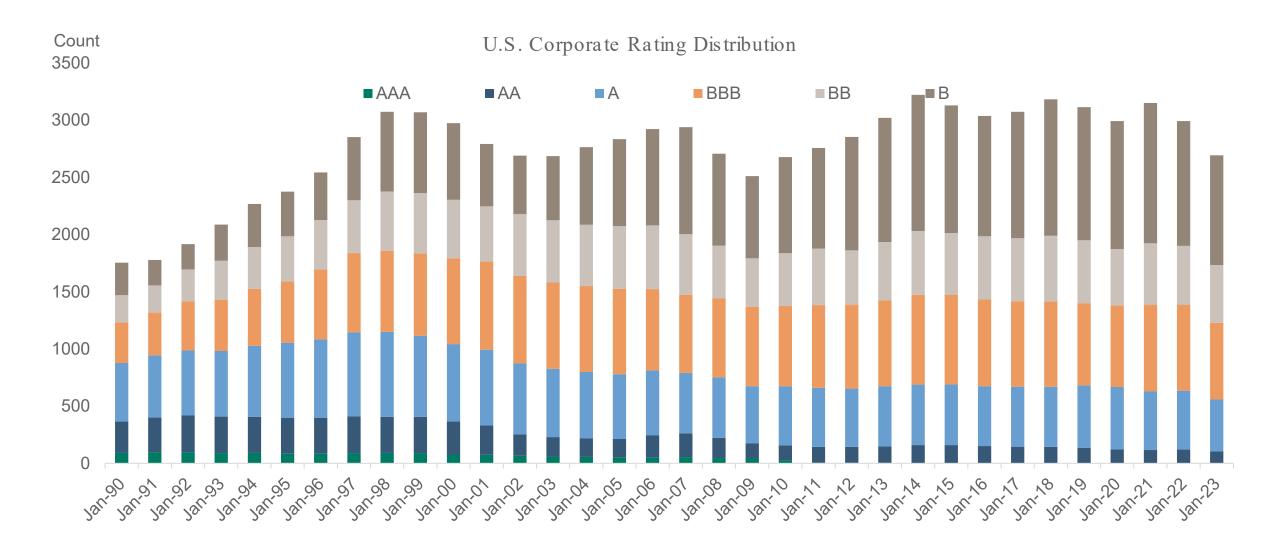
#### HY sector rating distributions



#### US corporate bond markets as a share of GDP

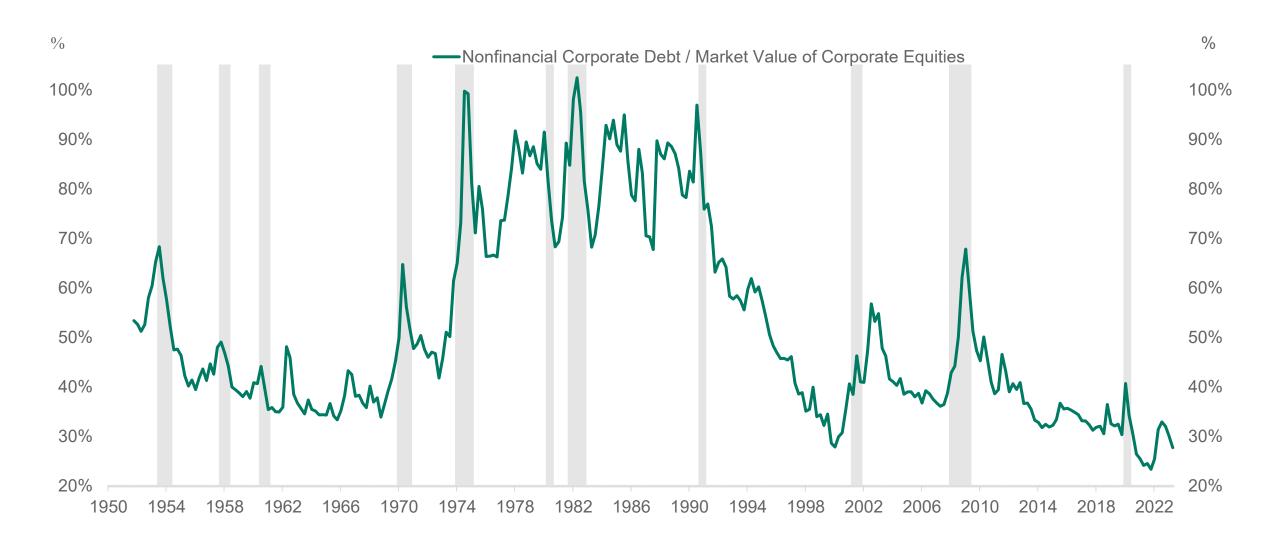


#### Distribution of corporate credit ratings



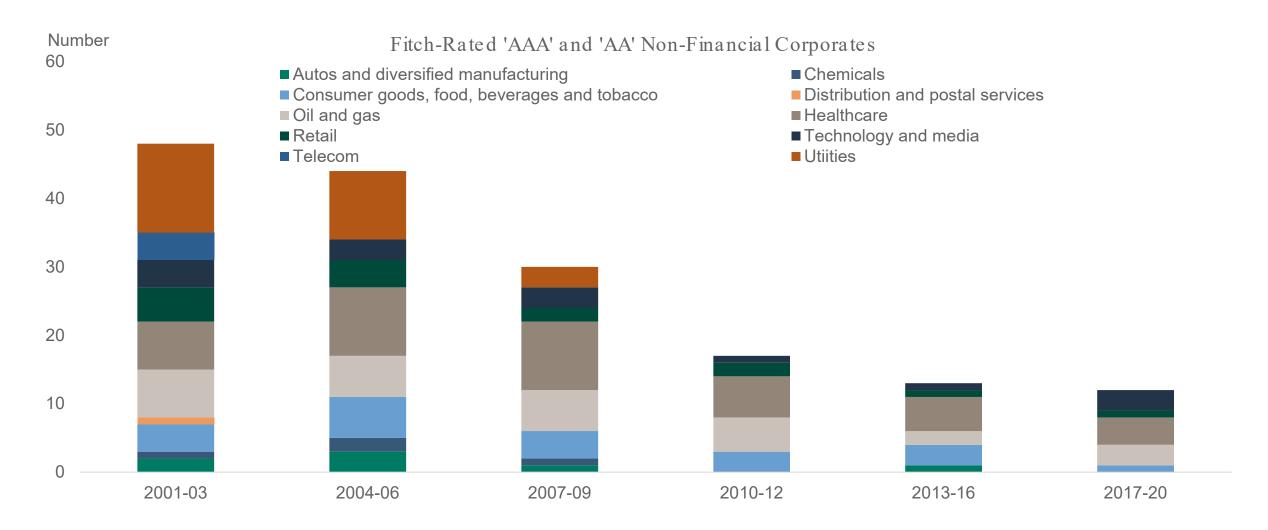
Source: S&P, Apollo Chief Economist

#### Debt-to-equity ratio is very low for corporate America

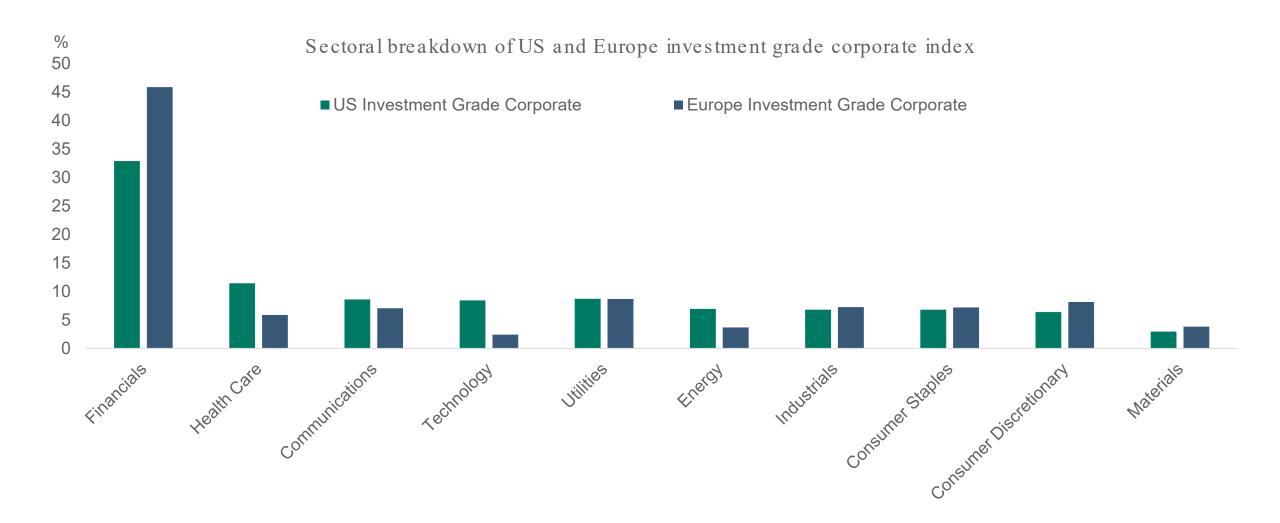


Source: FRB, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist.

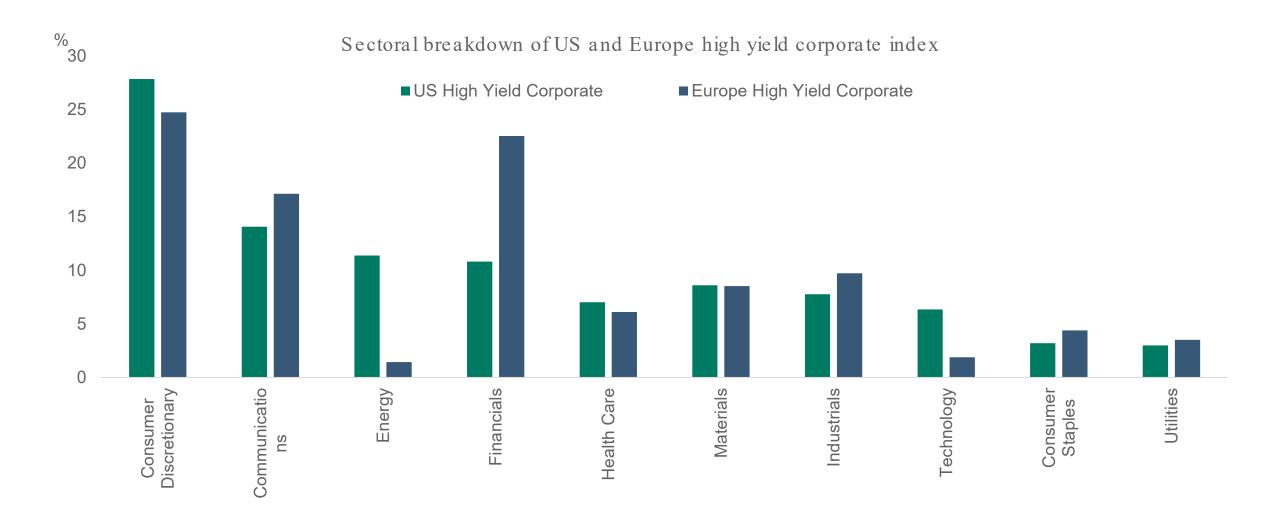
#### Fewer and fewer corporate bonds are rated AAA and AA



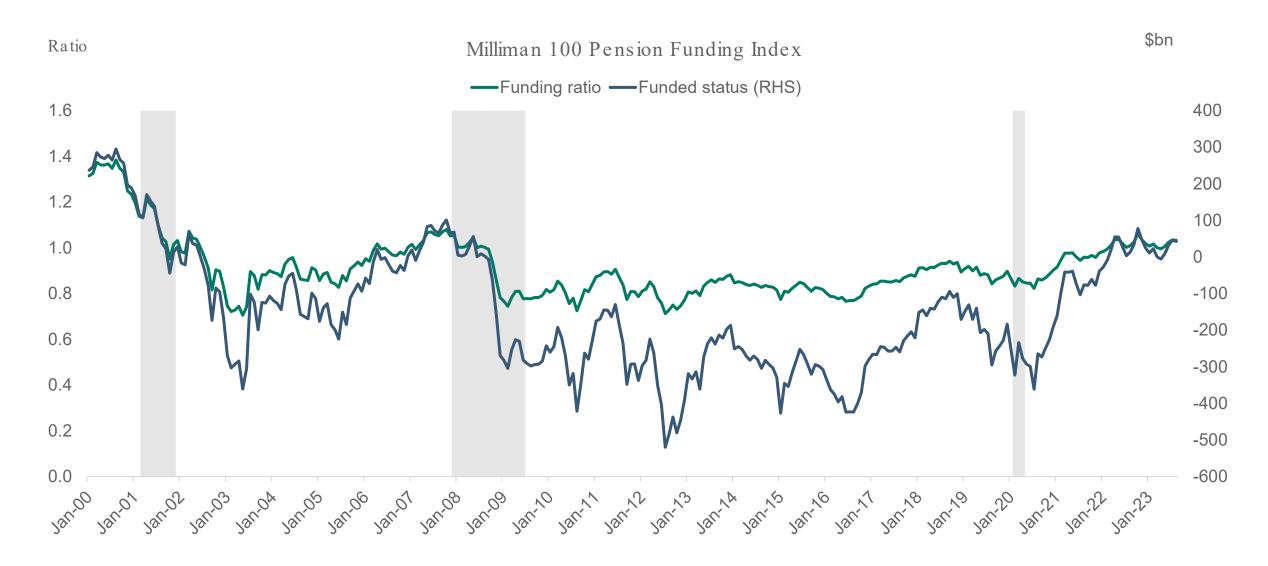
#### Comparing the US IG index with the EU IG index



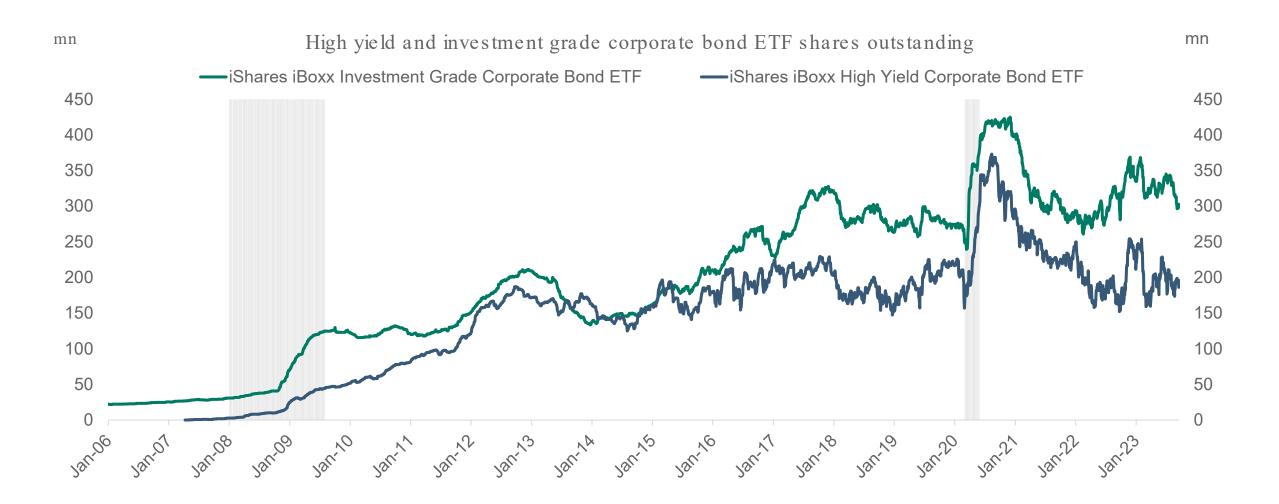
#### Comparing the US HY index with the EU HY index



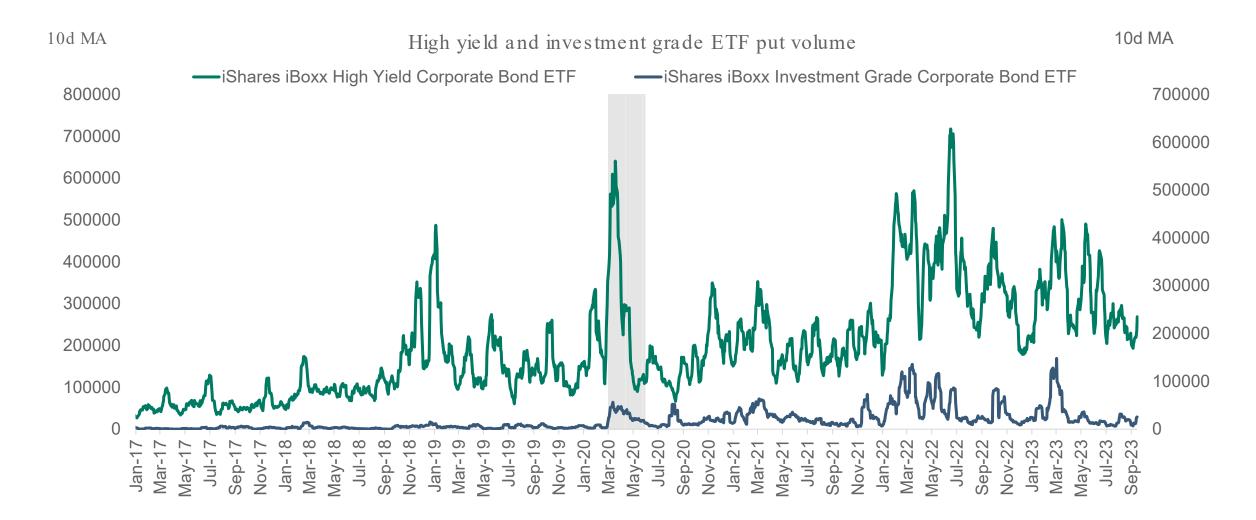
#### Pension funding status has improved



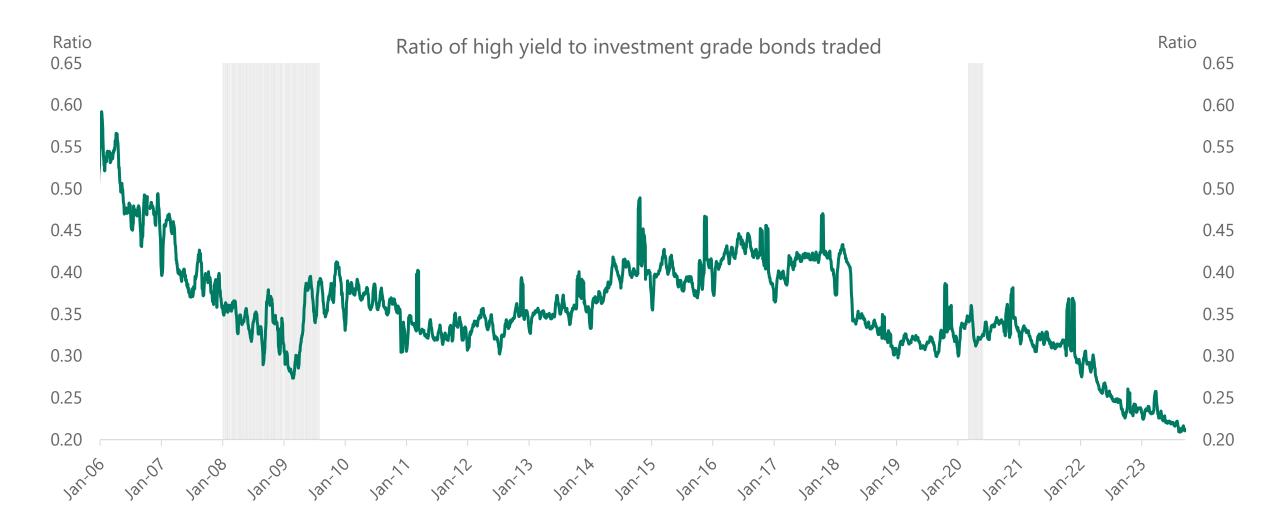
#### Retail investor activity in IG and HY



#### Put volumes for IG and HY ETF

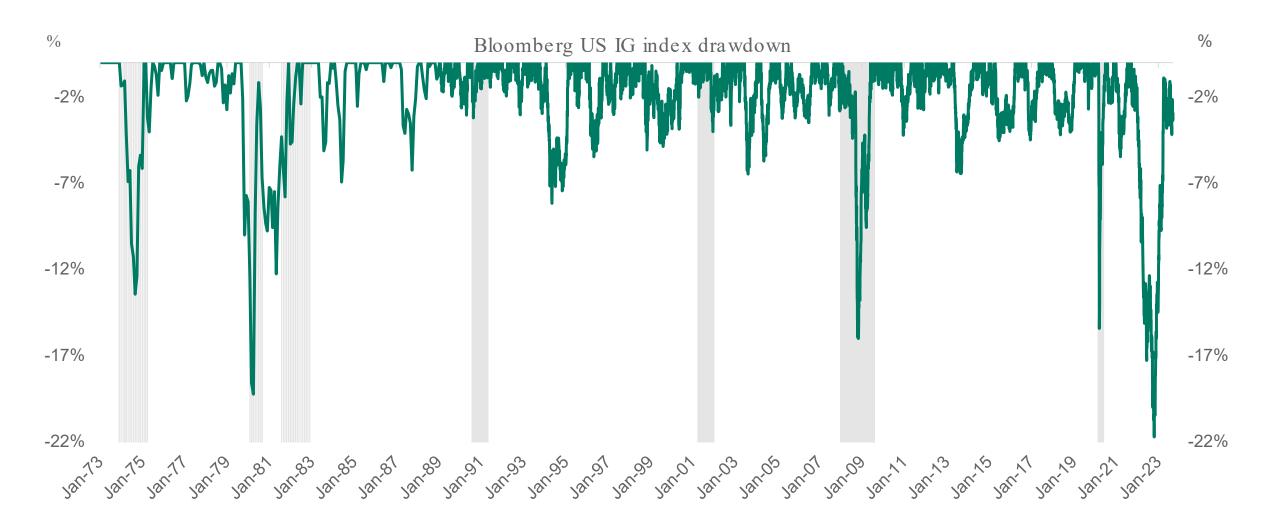


#### Fewer high yield bonds being traded



Source: FINRA Trace, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

#### IG index drawdown



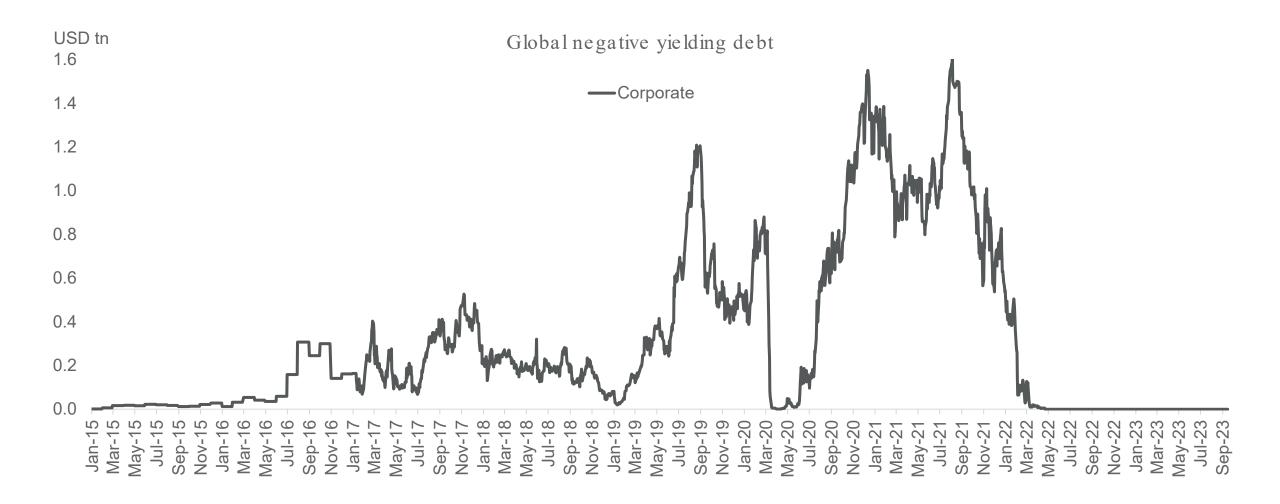
#### Bonds outstanding trading at negative interest rates



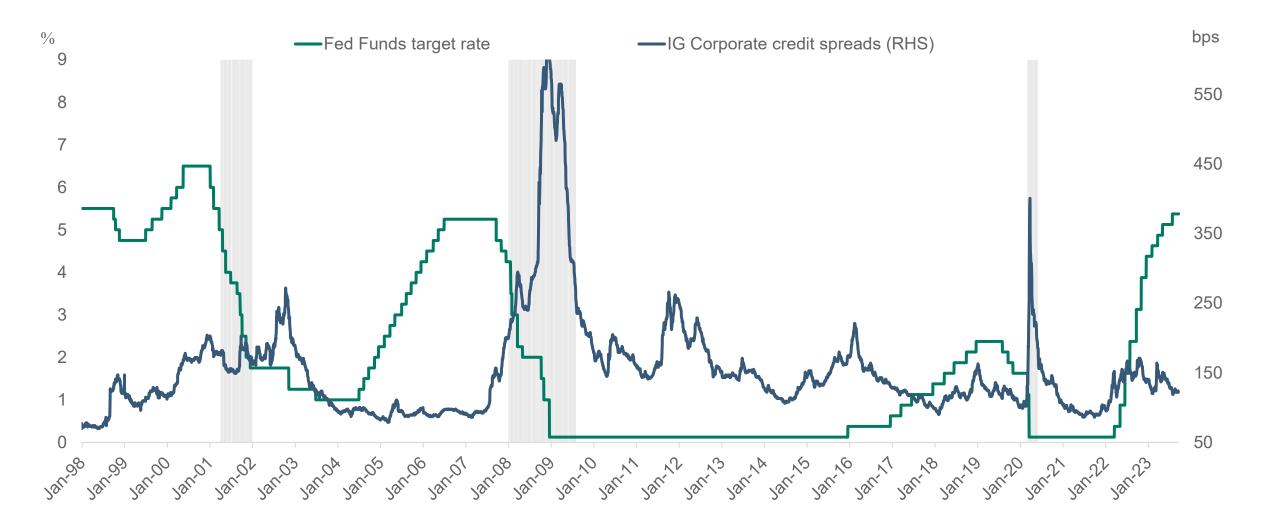
#### The total value of negative yielding debt in the world



#### All corporate bonds now have positive yields

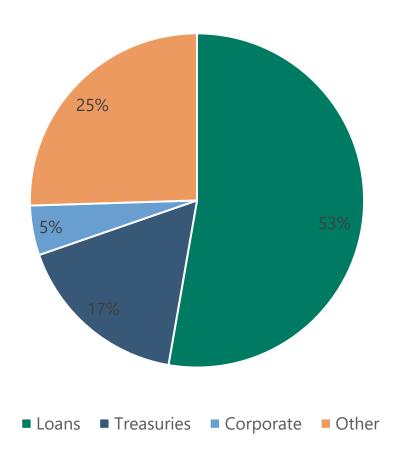


## Credit spreads normally widen when the Fed is hiking

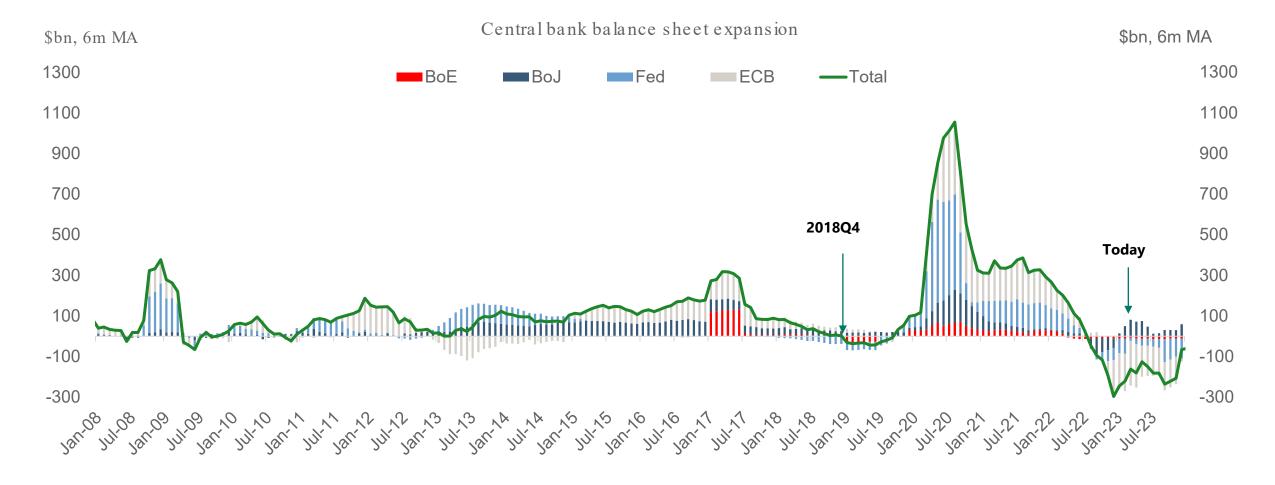


## US: Floating rate bonds outstanding, September 2023

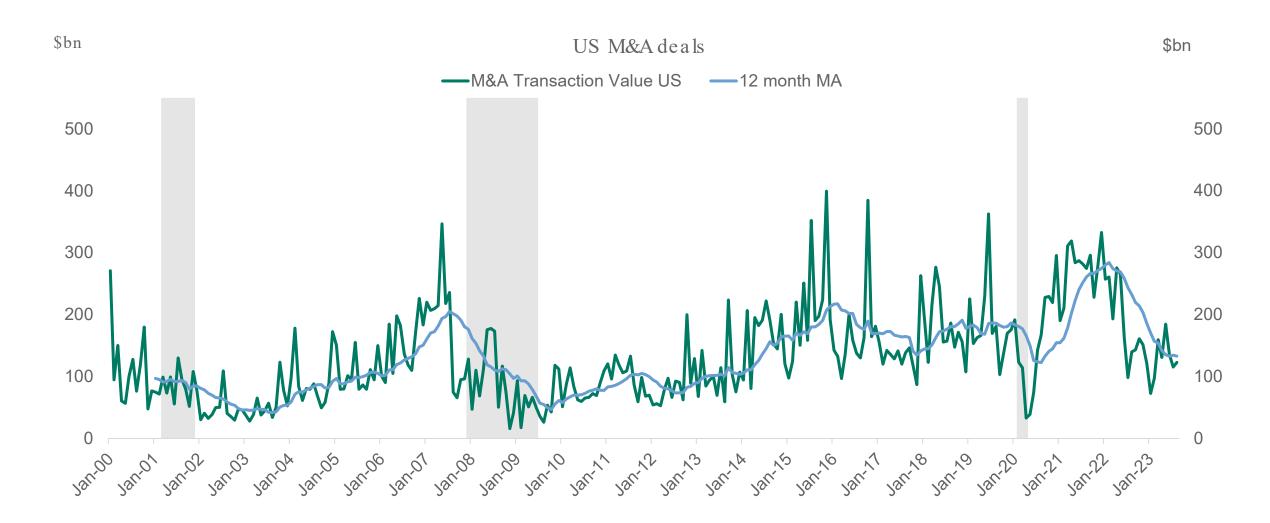




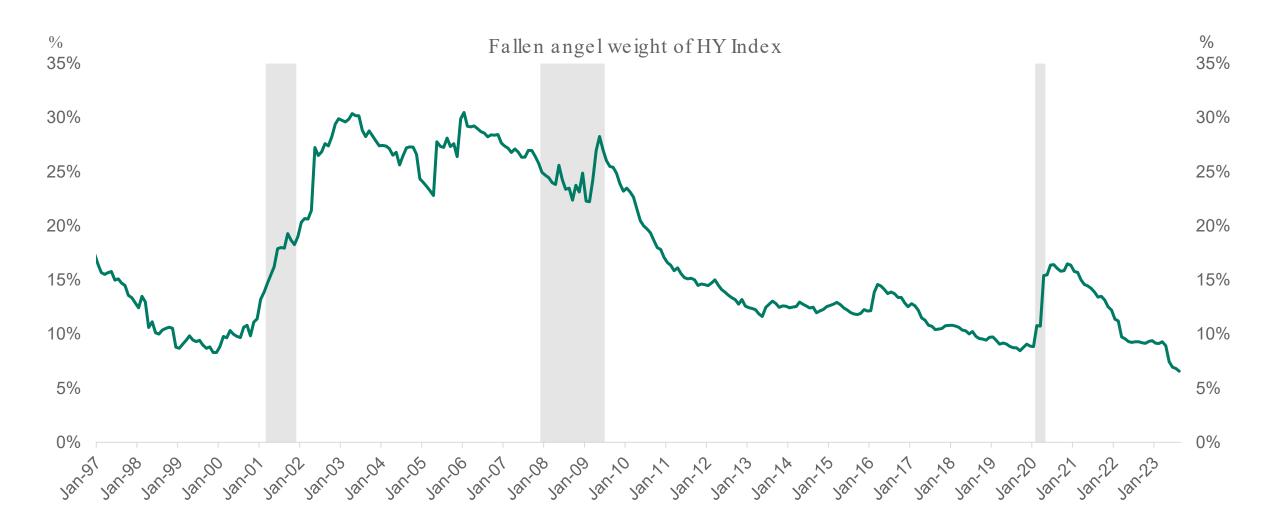
#### From QE to QT



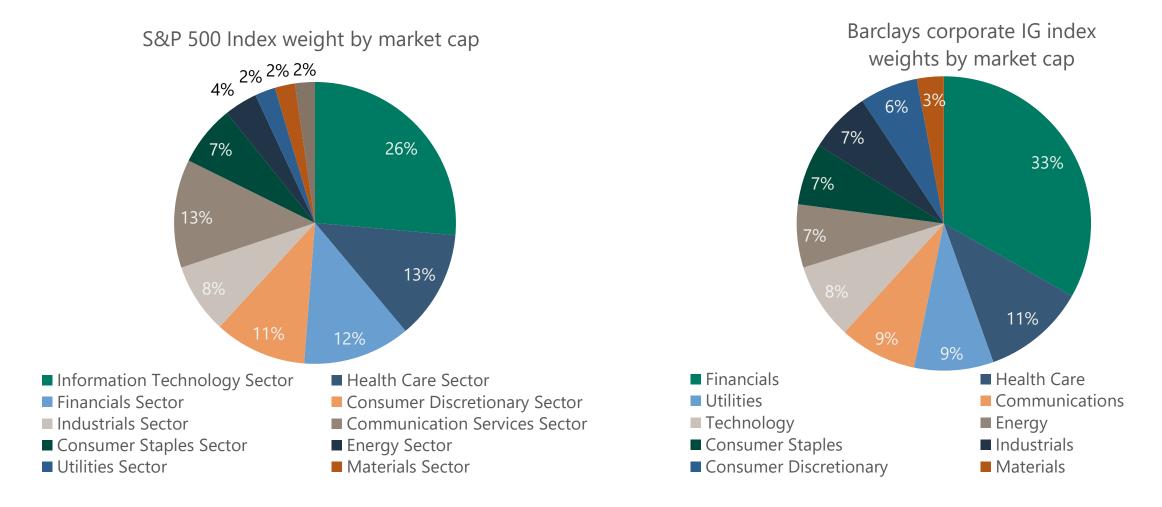
### M&A activity declining



#### Declining share of fallen angels in the HY index

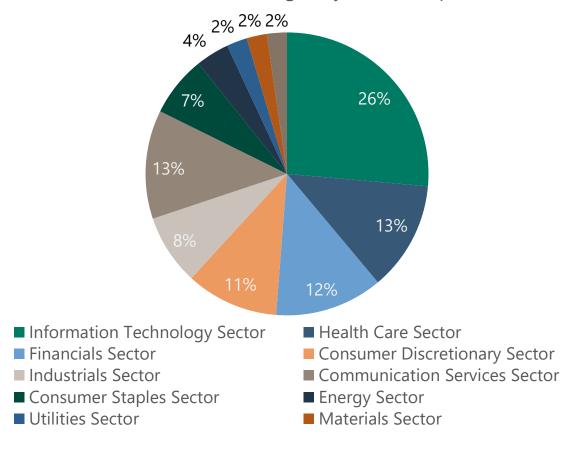


#### Big differences between weights in the S&P500 and the IG index

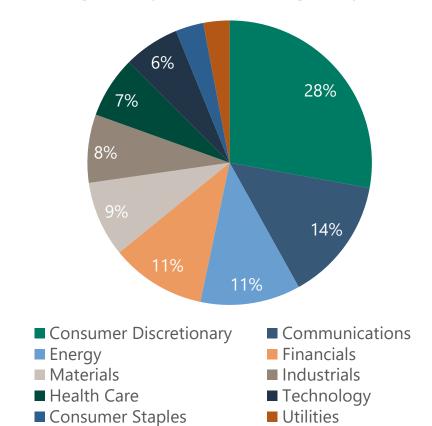


#### Big differences between weights in the S&P500 and the HY index

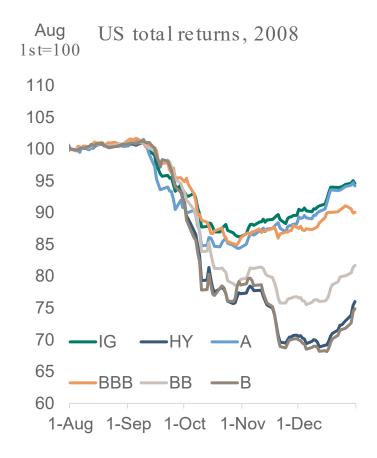


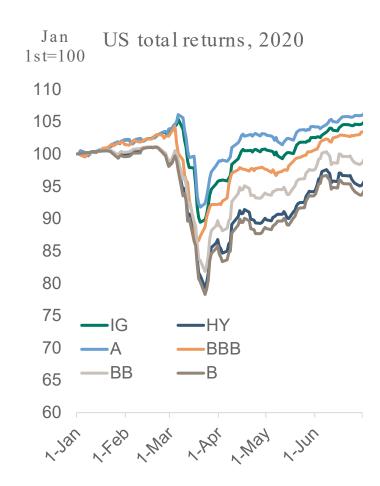


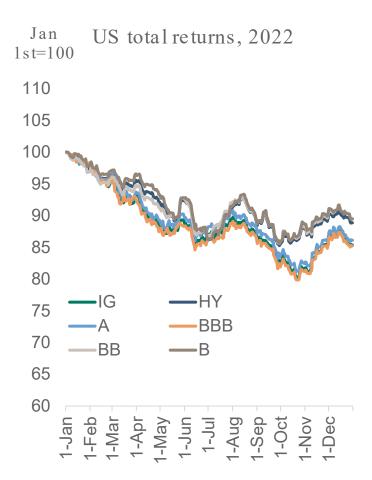
#### Bloomberg Barclays HY index weights by mkt cap



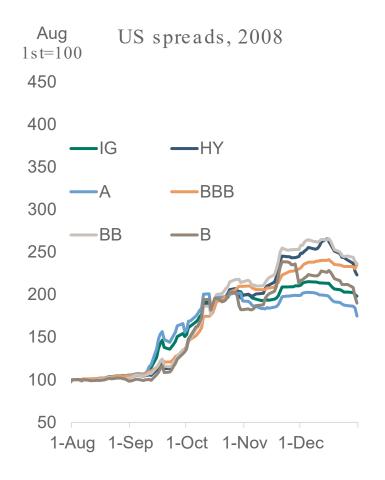
Synchronized sell-off in credit so far. Little differentiation between credits compared with 2008 and March 2020 episodes.

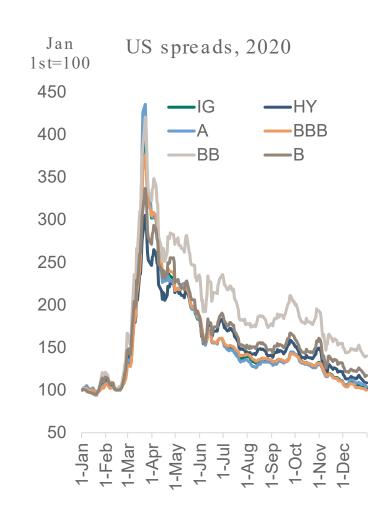


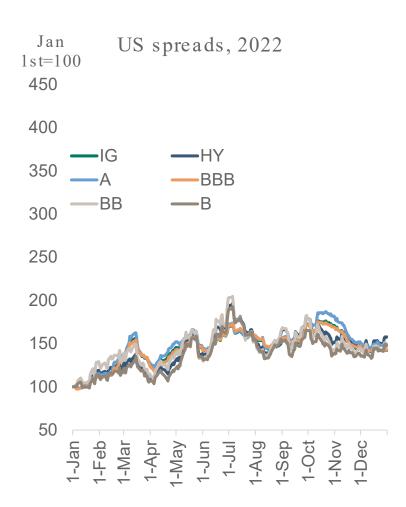




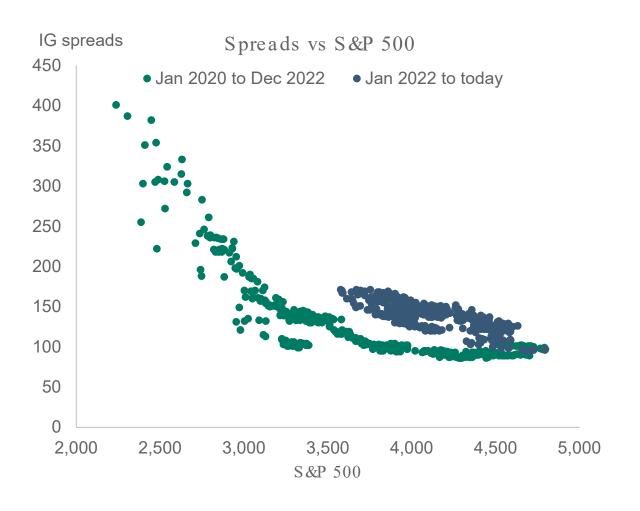
Synchronized sell-off in credit so far. Little differentiation between credits compared with 2008 and March 2020 episodes.

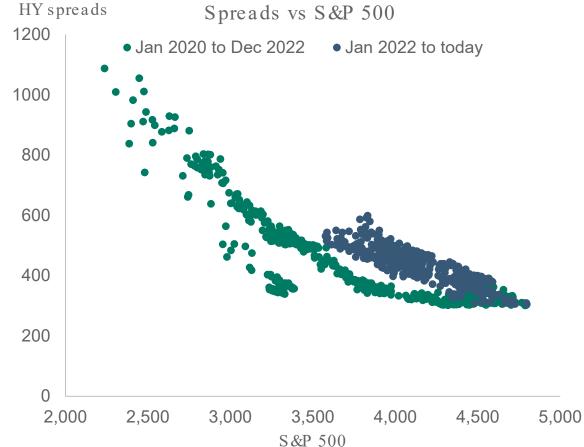




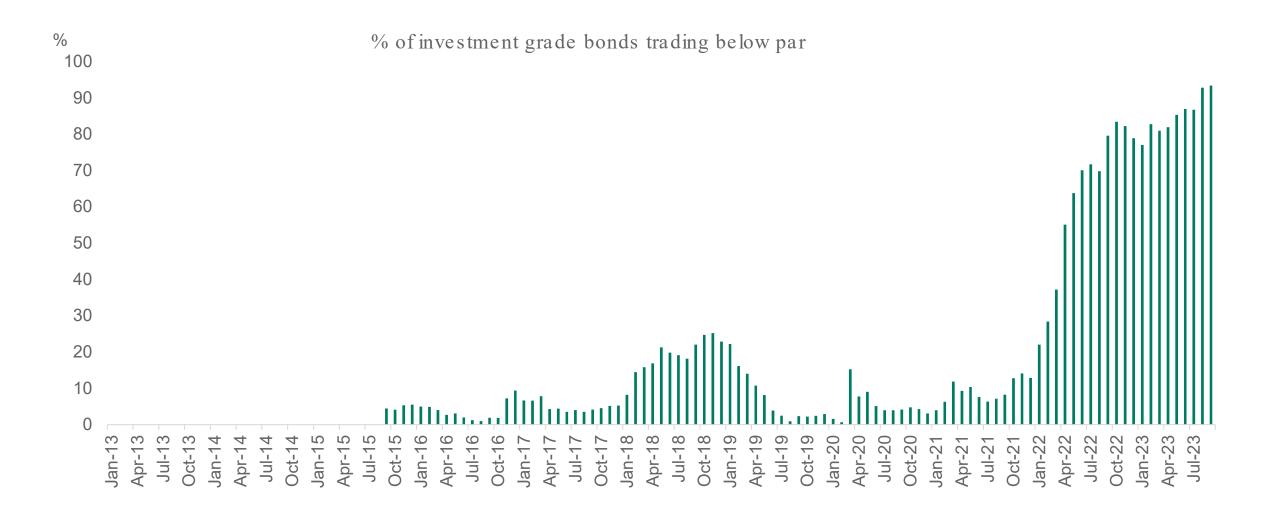


#### Valuation of credit versus equities





#### 91% of the US IG market trading below par



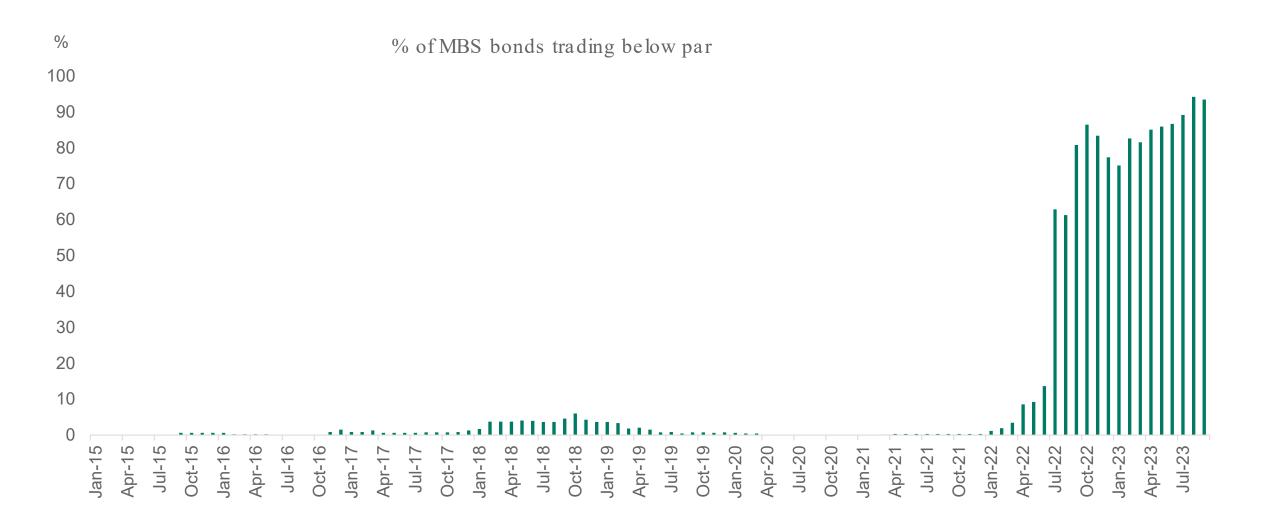
#### Less than 50% of the US IG market trading below 90



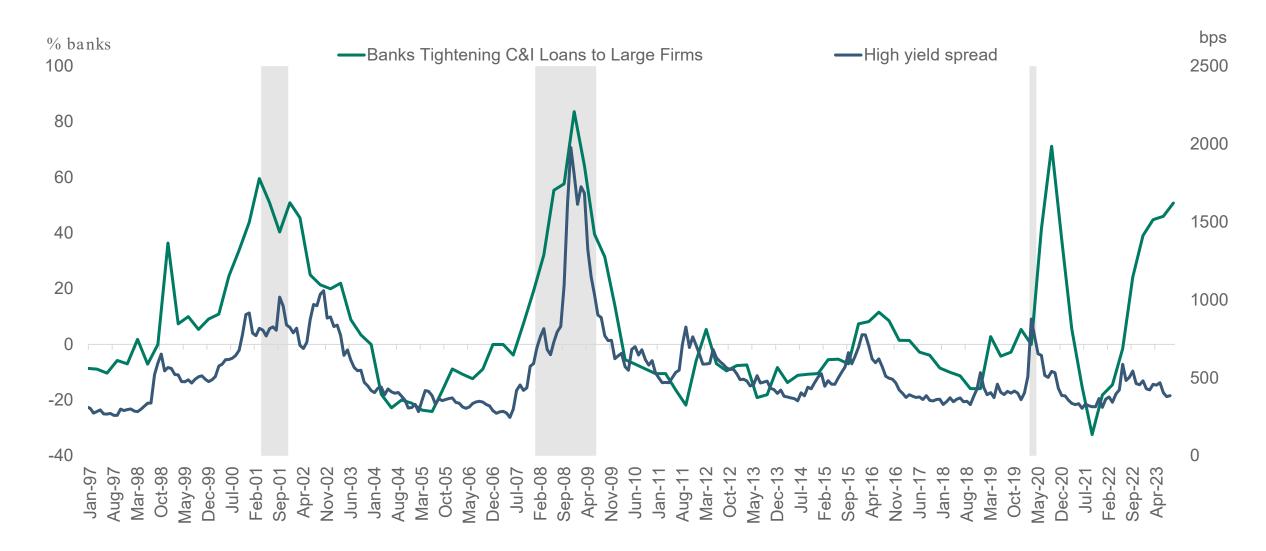
#### Only 15% of the US IG market trading below 80



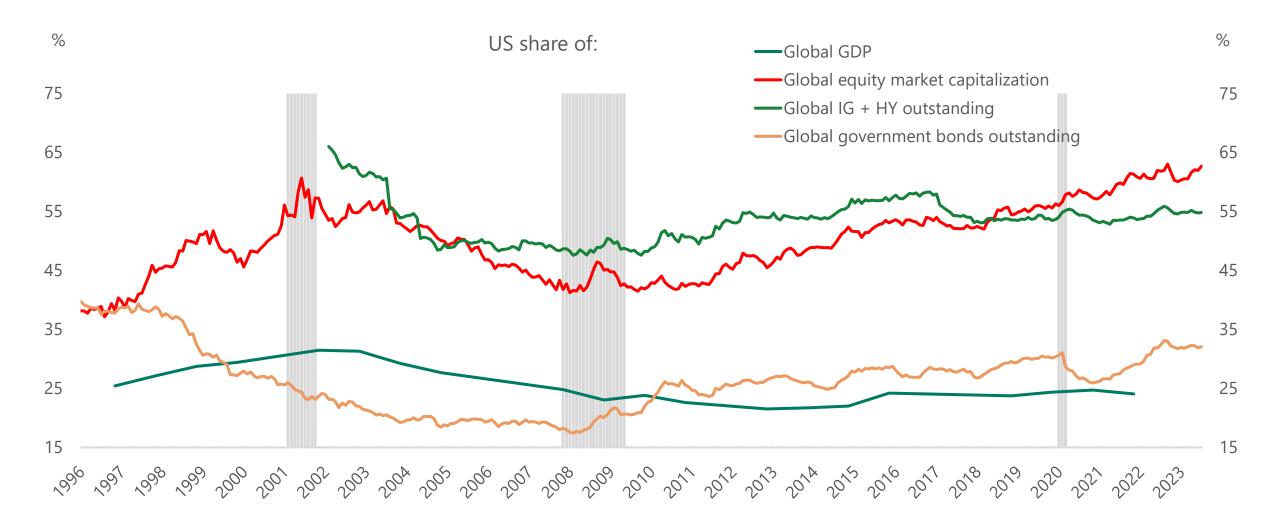
#### 90% of the US MBS market trading below par



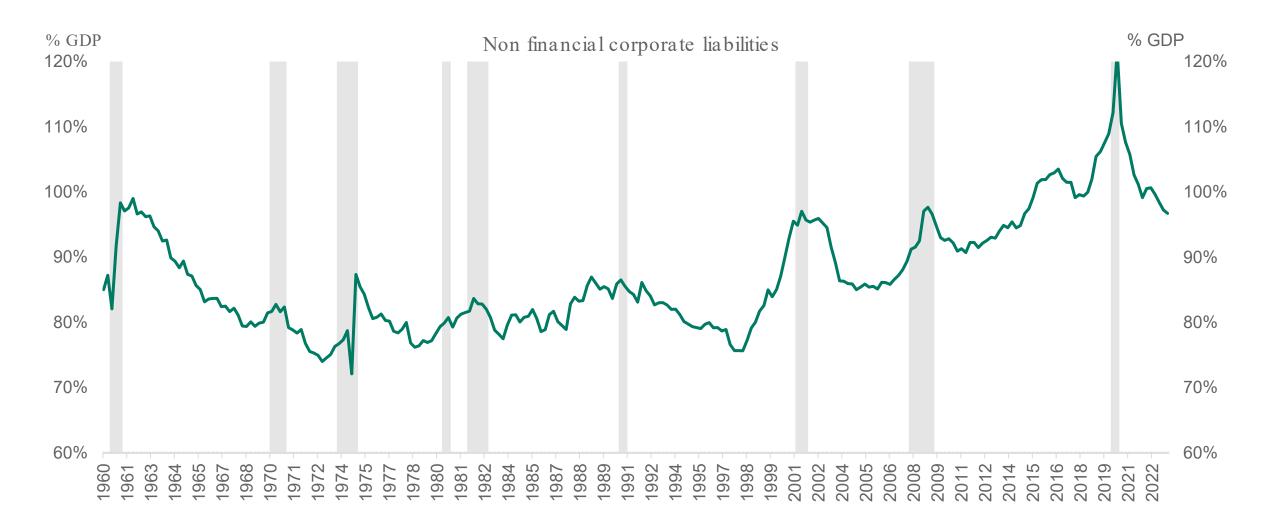
### Banks tightening credit conditions, HY spread should be trading wider



#### US share of the world economy and global financial markets



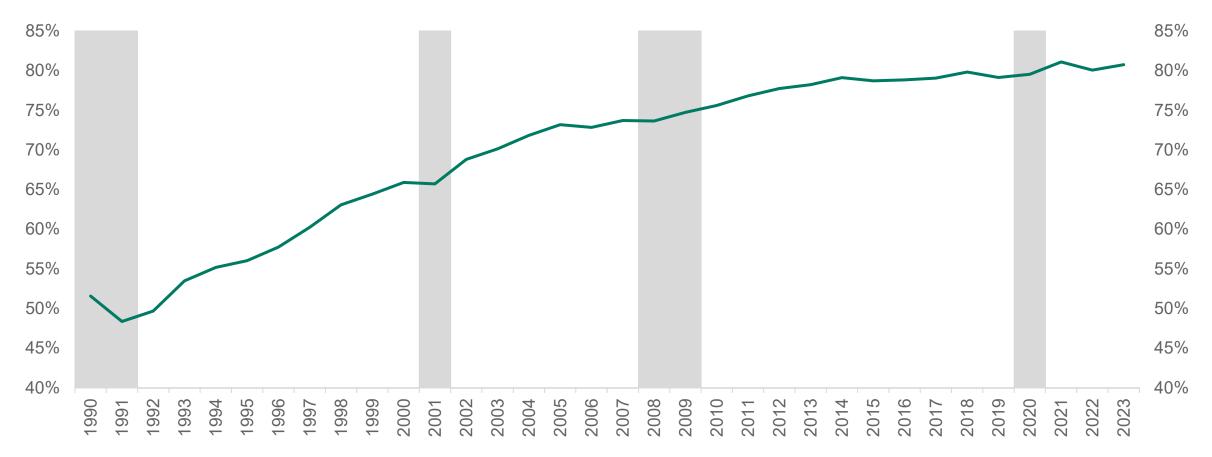
## Corporate debt is coming down as a share of GDP



Source: FRB, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

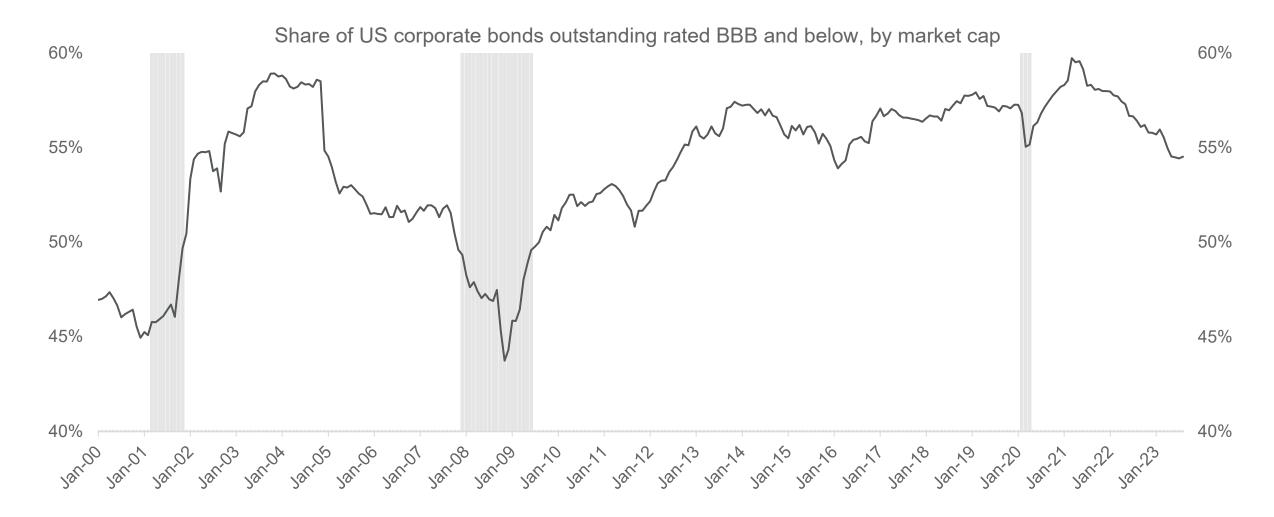
#### Lower-rated firms are by definition more vulnerable to rising interest rates



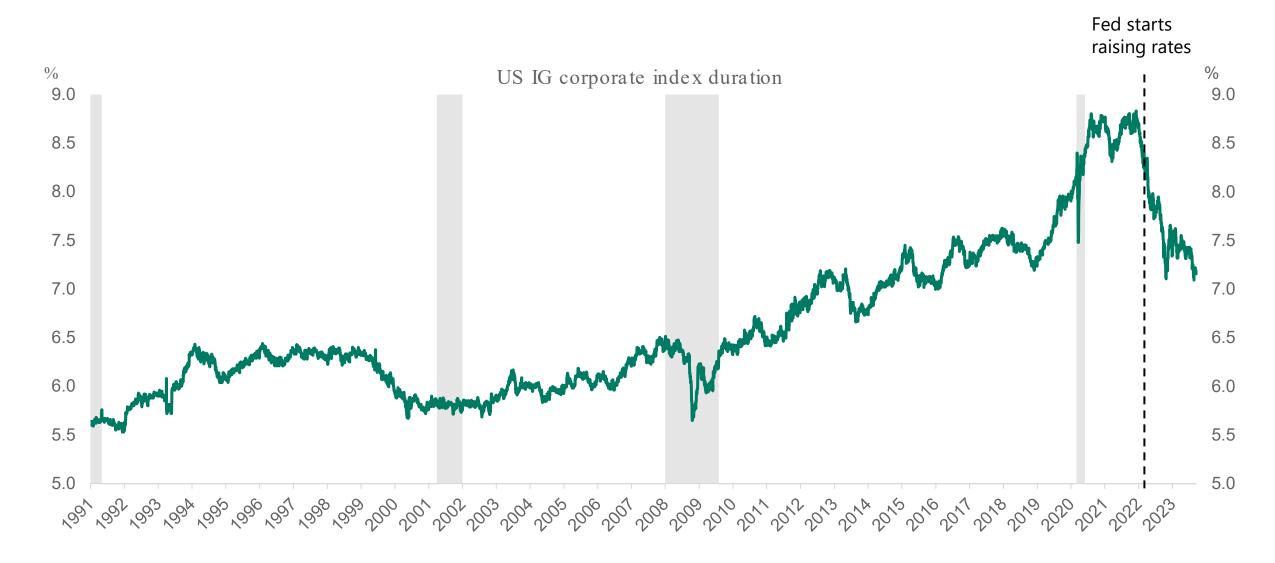


Source: S&P, Apollo Chief Economist

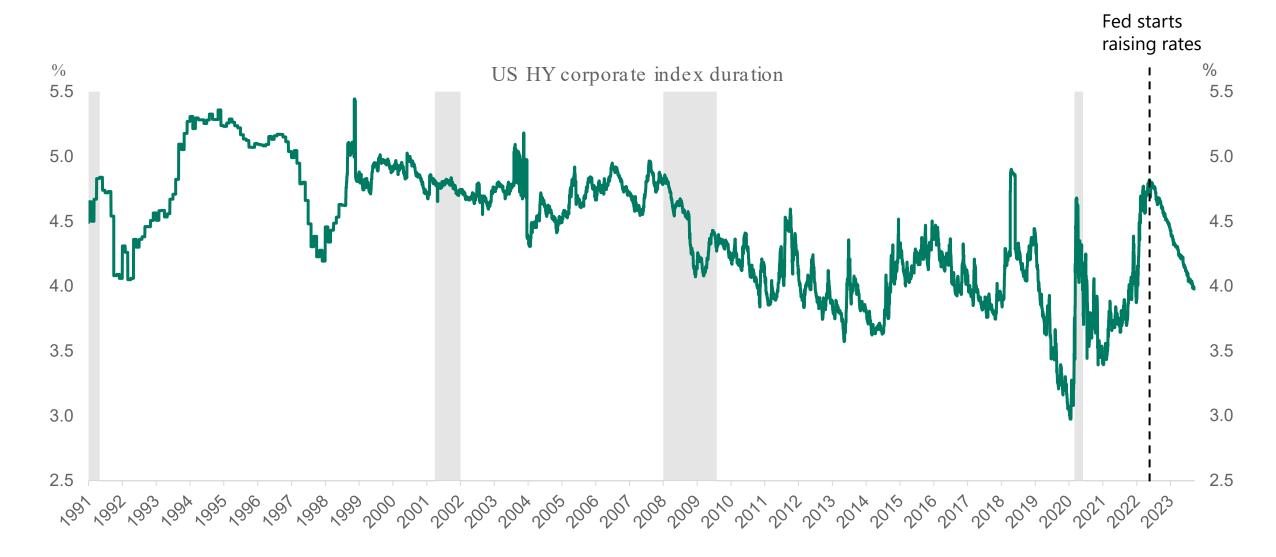
# Share of corporate bond market value outstanding rated BBB and below



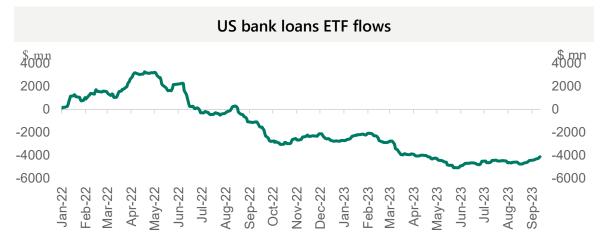
#### IG index duration declining

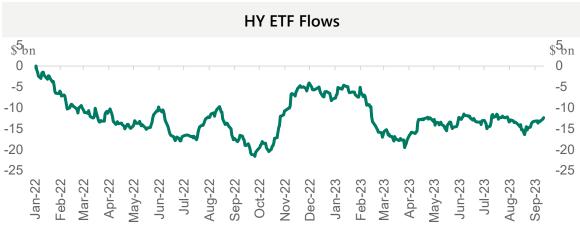


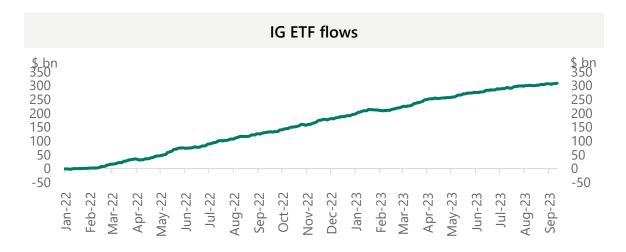
### HY index duration declining

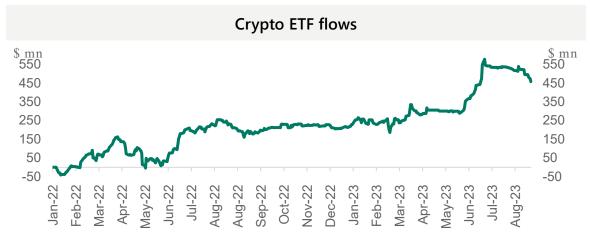


#### Flow monitor

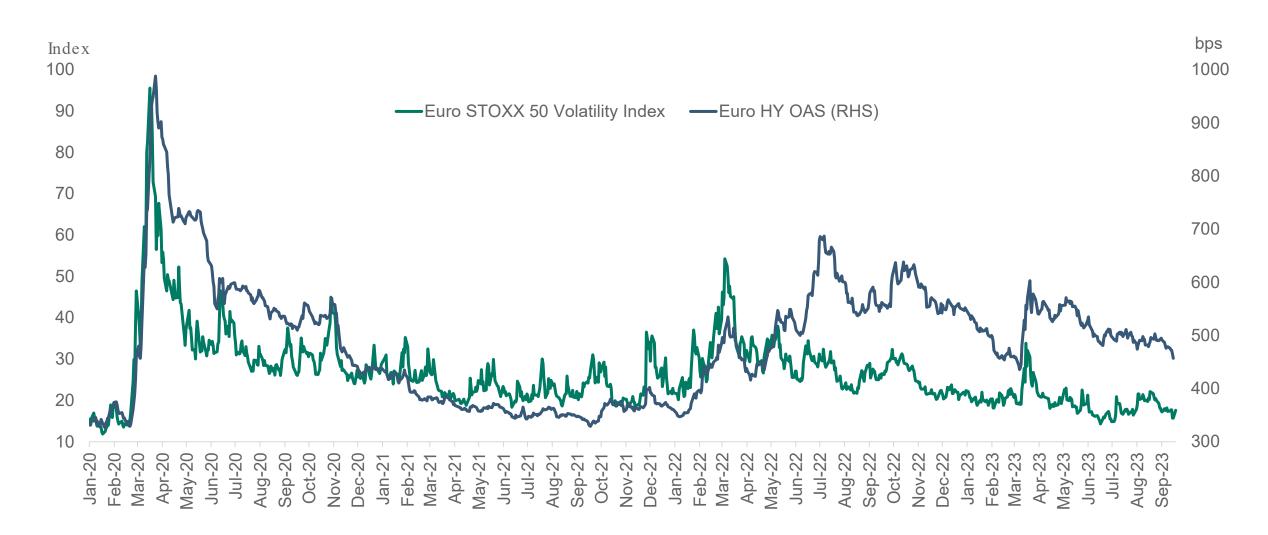






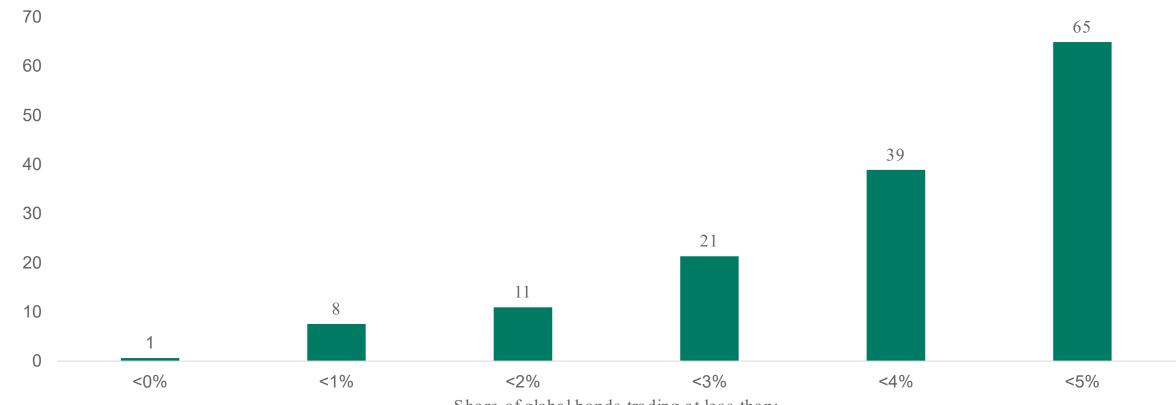


# Convergence between EU equity vol and EU HY spreads



# 21% of bonds in the world trading at less than 3% yield

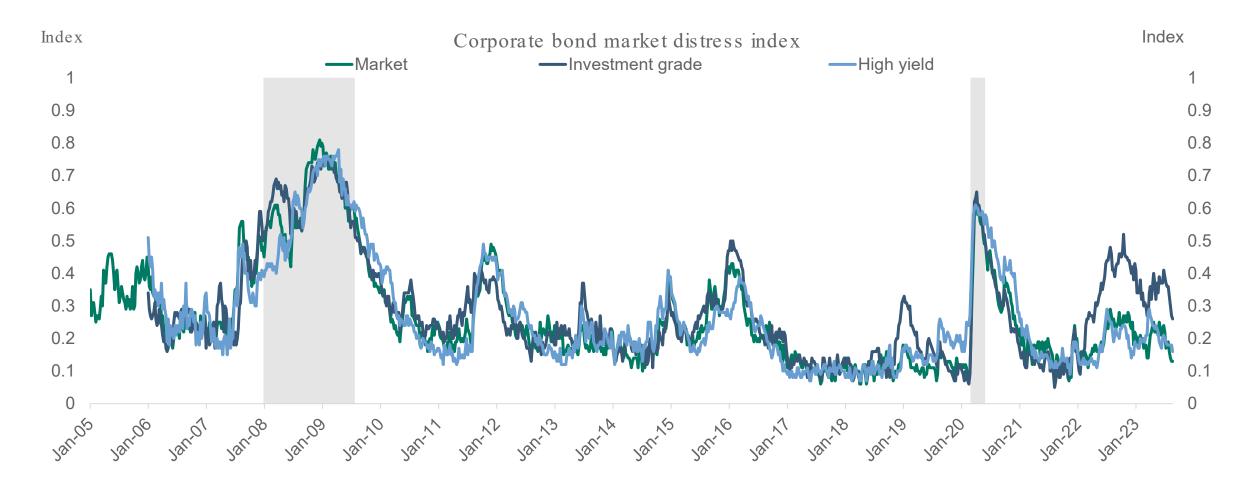




Share of global bonds trading at less than:

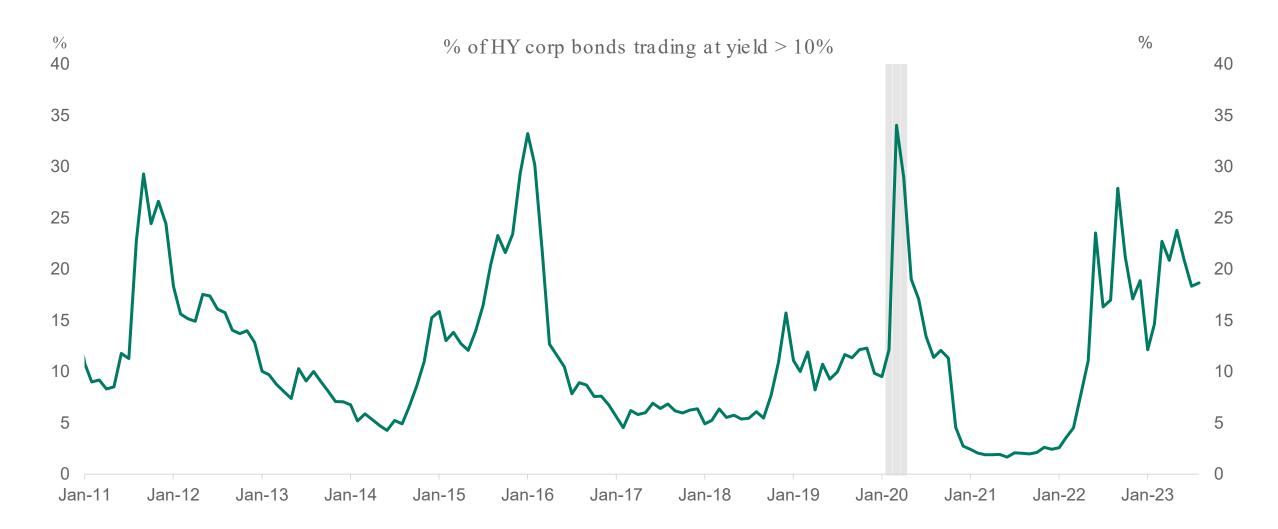
Source: Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist

# NY Fed measure of corporate bond market functioning elevated level of distress in IG

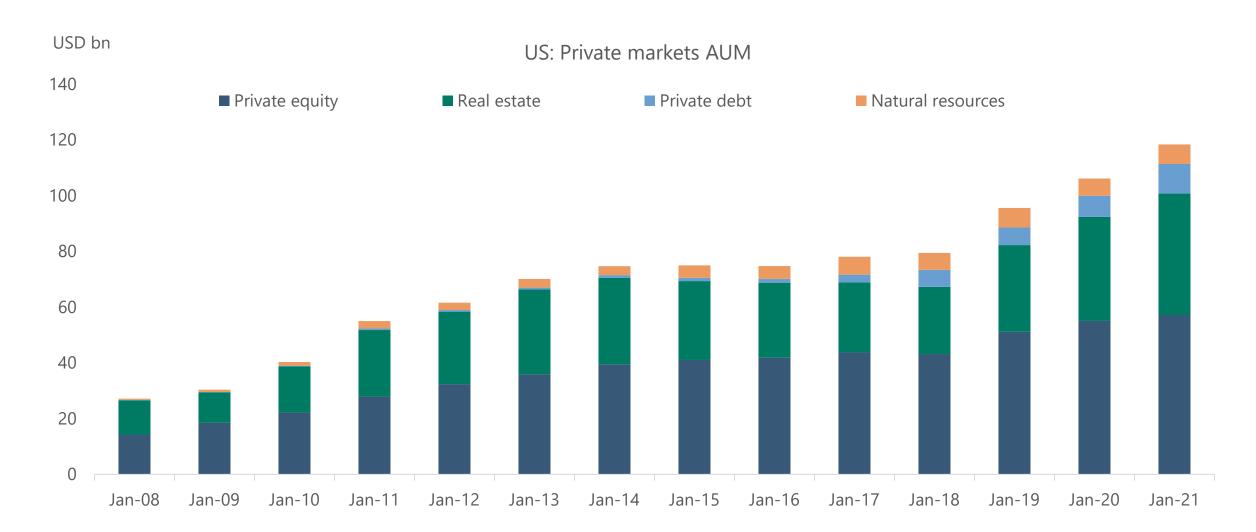


Source: FRB of New York, Apollo Chief Economist (Note: Corporate bonds are a key source of funding for U.S. non-financial corporations and a key investment security for insurance companies, pension funds, and mutual funds. Distress in the corporate bond market can thus both impair access to credit for corporate borrowers and reduce investment opportunities for key financial sub-sectors. CMDI offers a single measure to quantify joint dislocations in the primary and secondary corporate bond markets. Ranging from 0 to 1, a higher level of CMDI corresponds with historically extreme levels of dislocation. CMDI links bond market functioning to future economic activity through a new measure.

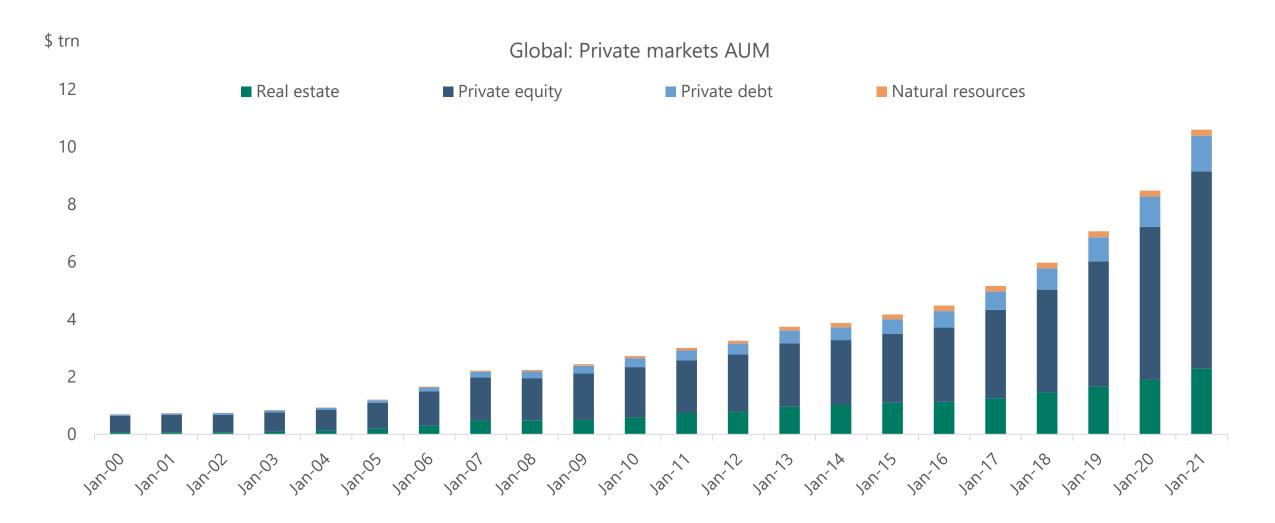
# 18% of HY bonds trading with yield higher than 10%



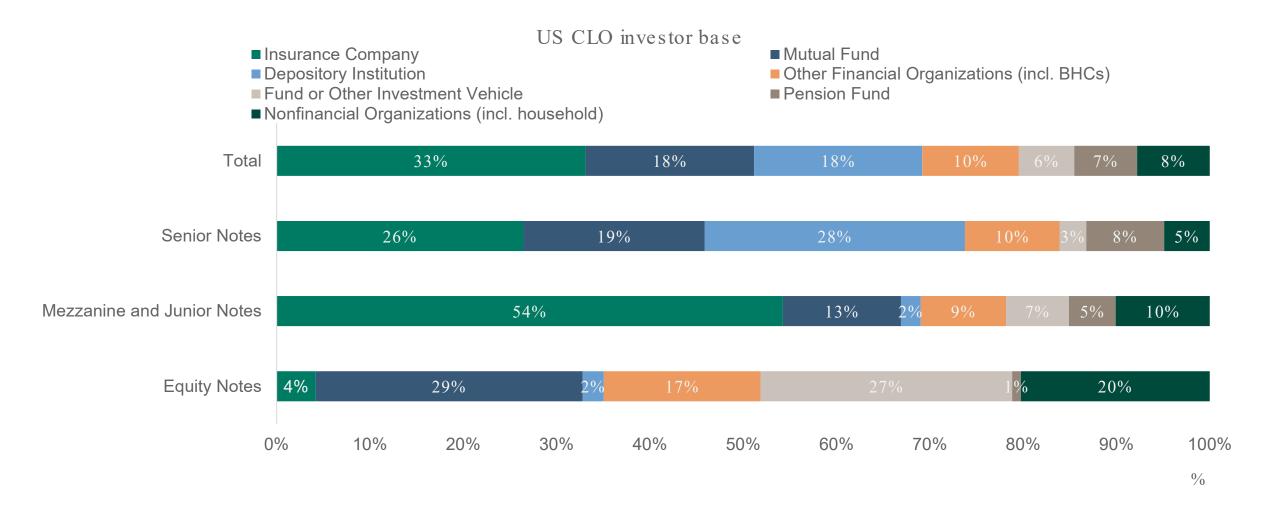
# US: Total assets under management in private markets



# Total assets under management in private markets funds globally

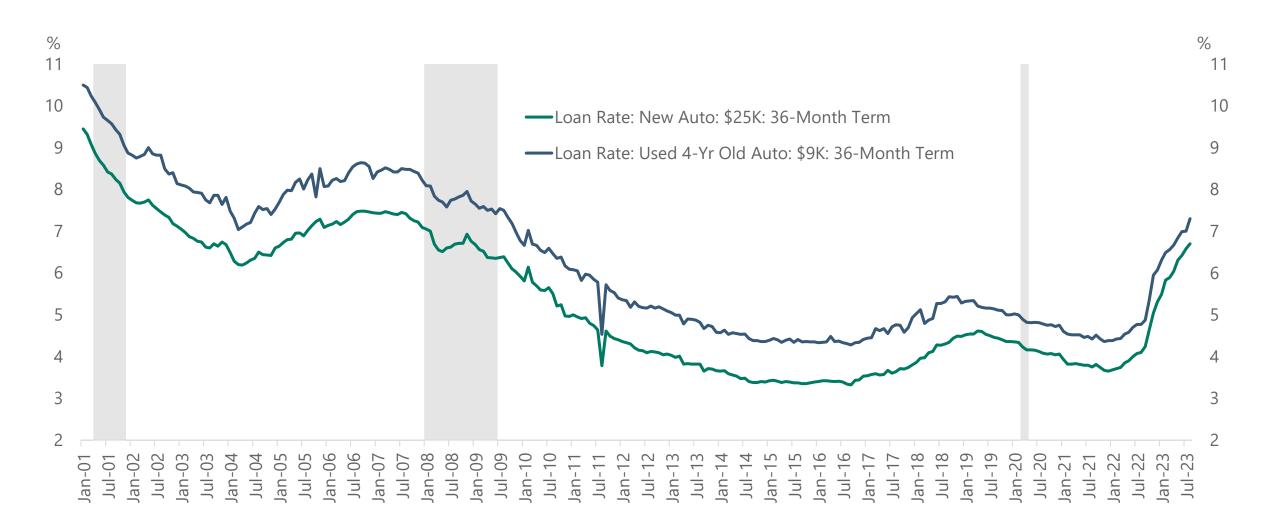


#### US CLO investor base by tranche



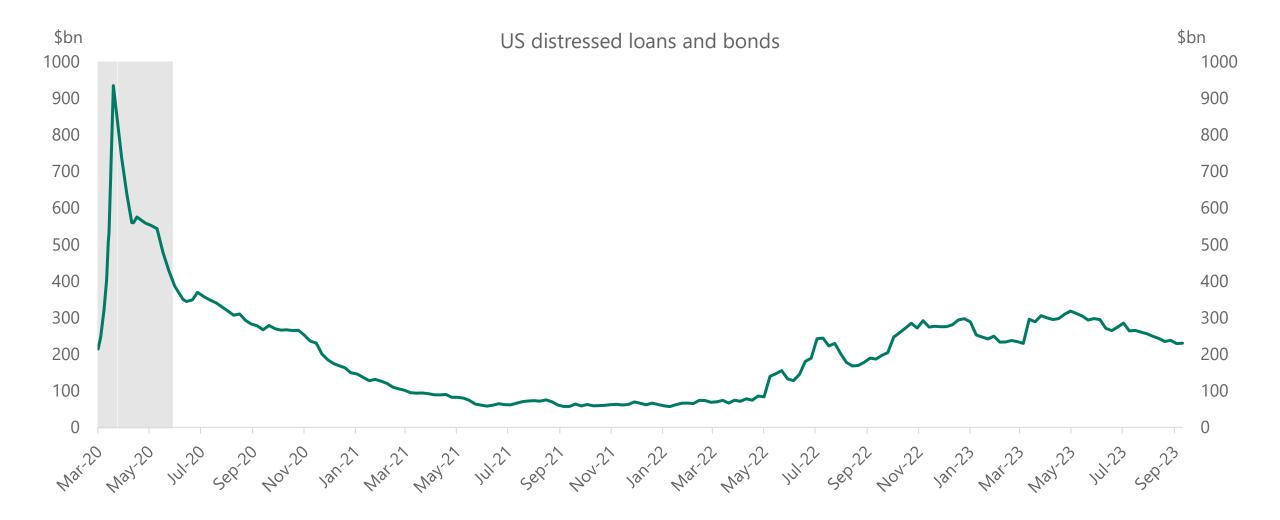
Source: TIC, Moody's data, Fed, Apollo Chief Economist

# Auto loan rates rising

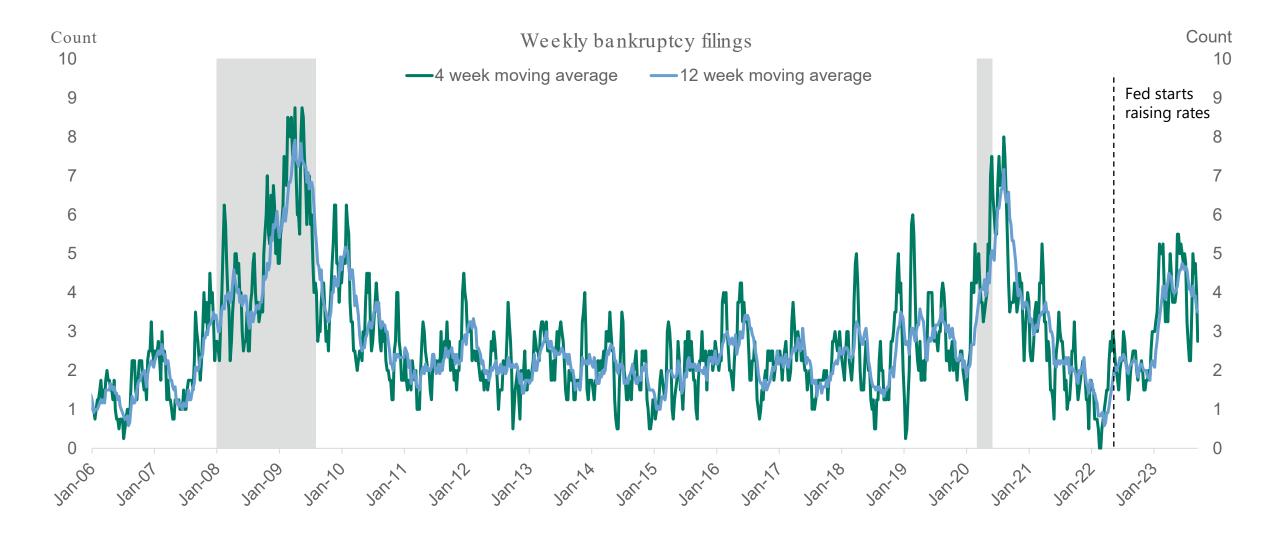


Source: RateWatch, Haver Analytics, Apollo Chief Economist

# Distressed debt is growing

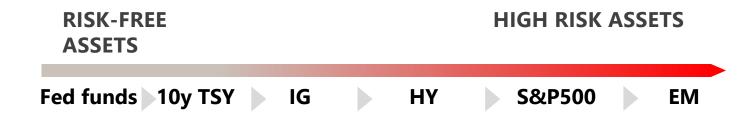


# Weekly bankruptcy filings for companies with at least \$50mn in liabilities



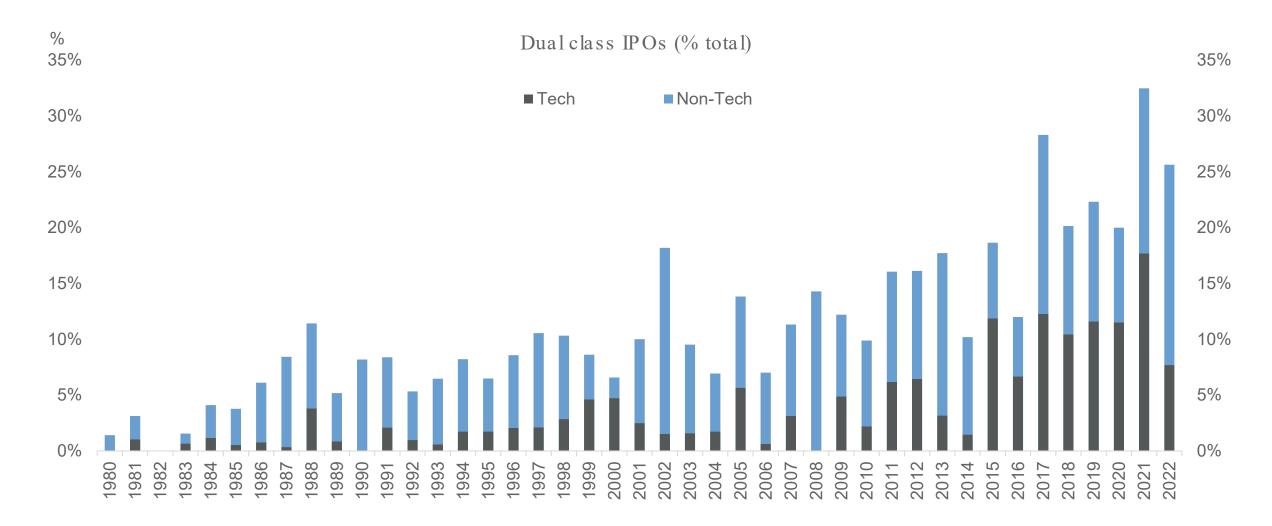
# Inflation is reversing the hunt for yield

#### Risk spectrum



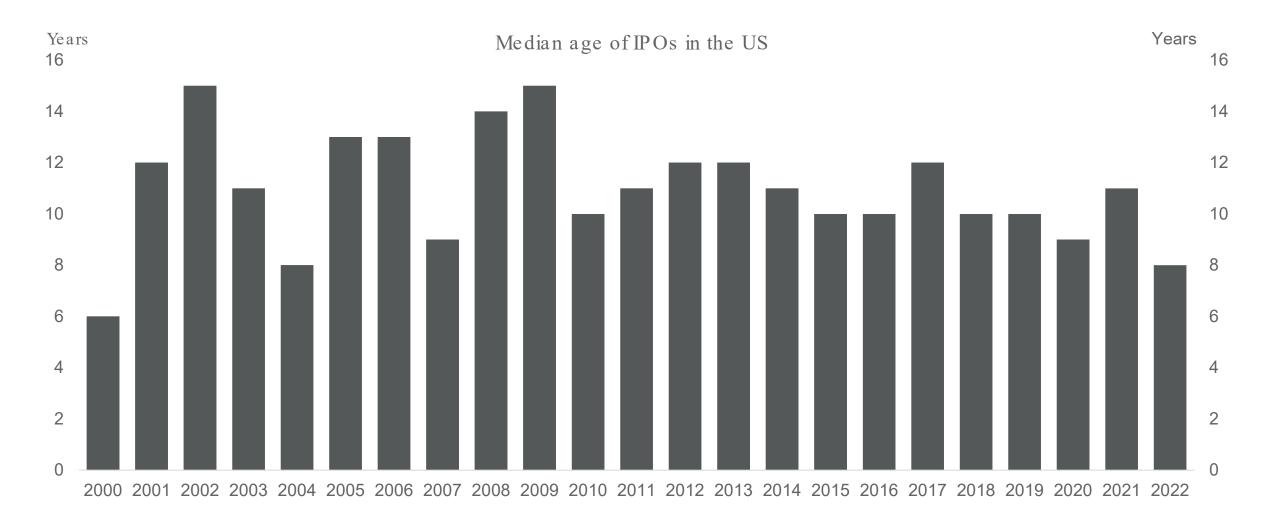
Source: Apollo Chief Economist

#### Dual class IPOs, driven by tech



Source: Jay Ritter, Apollo Chief Economist

# Median age of IPOs

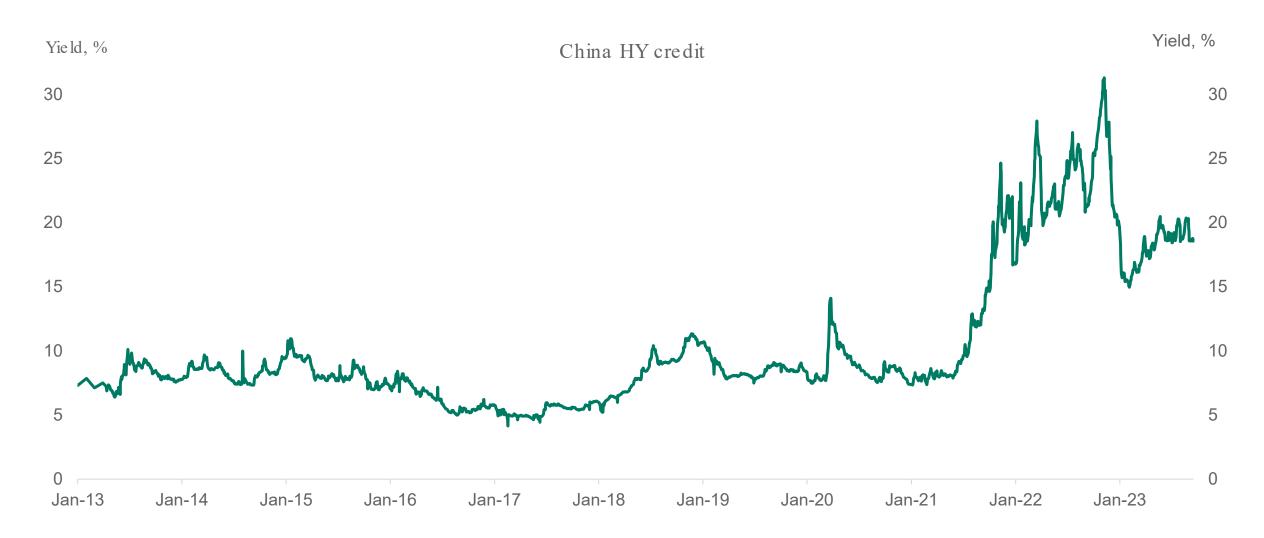


Source: Jay Ritter, Apollo Chief Economist

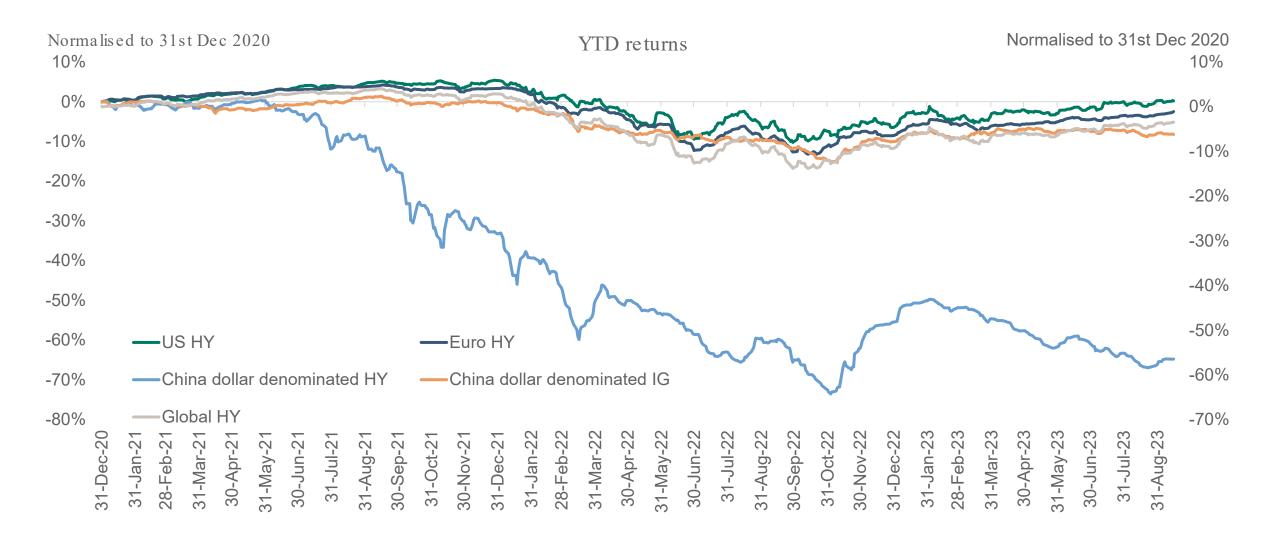
# China HY



# The yield on China HY is now at 20%



#### Little contagion from China HY to US and EU credit markets



Source: ICE BofA, Bloomberg, Apollo Chief Economist,

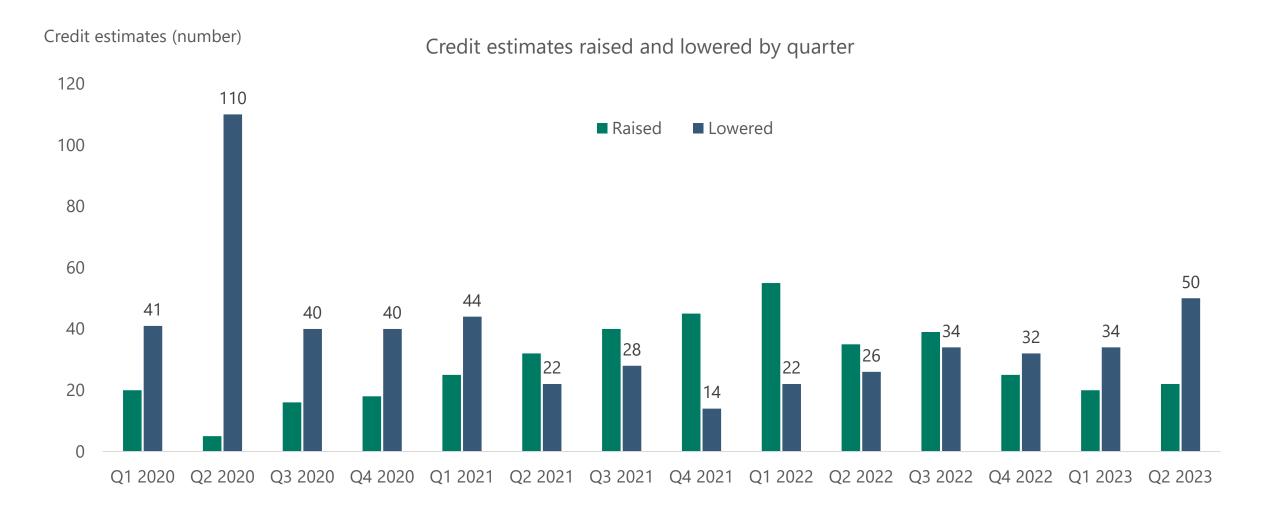
# Top issuer names



# Top issuer names for IG and HY

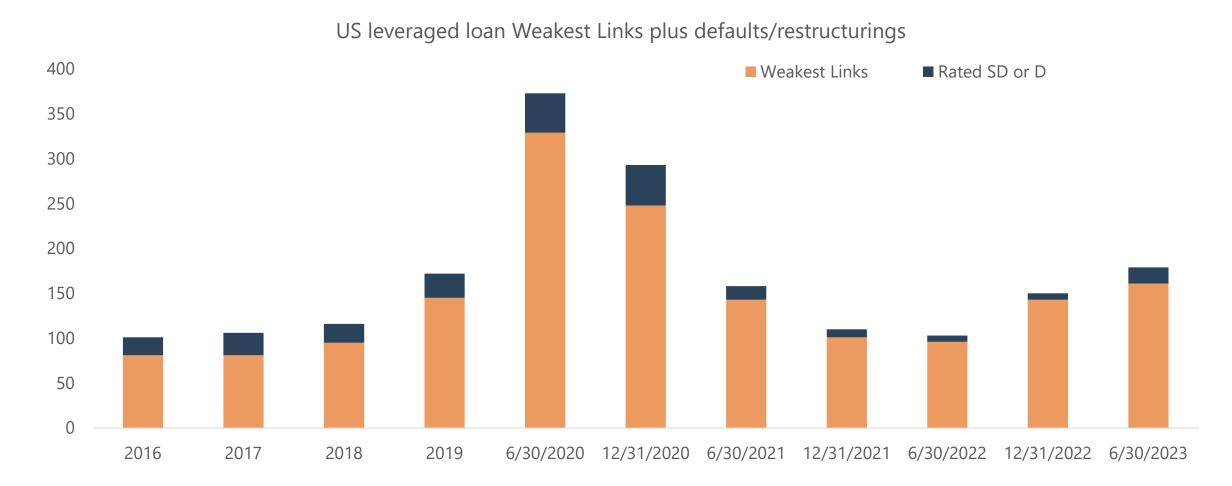
	Top 50 Investment Grade corporate bond issuers	Top 50 High Yield corporate bond issuers
1	Bank of America Corporation	Ford Motor Credit Company LLC
2	JPMorgan Chase & Co.	CCO Holdings LLC/ CCO Holdings Capital Corp.
3	Morgan Stanley	Tenet Healthcare Corporation
4	Citigroup Inc.	TransDigm Inc.
5	Goldman Sachs Group Inc.	Carnival Corporation
6	Wells Fargo & Company	Ford Motor Company
7	Apple Inc.	Royal Caribbean Group
8	HSBC Holdings PLC	CSC Holdings LLC
9	AT&T Inc	Community Health Systems Incorporated
10	Oracle Corporation	DISH DBS Corporation
11	Verizon Communications Inc.	Bausch Health Companies Inc
12	Comcast Corporation	Caesars Entertainment Inc New
13	UnitedHealth Group Inc.	Sirius Xm Radio Inc
14	Amazon.com Inc.	Iron Mountain Inc.
15	Amgen Inc.	OneMain Financial Corporation
16	UBS Group AG	AAdvantage Loyalty IP Ltd/ American Airlines Inc
17	CVS Health Corp	Albertsons Cos Inc / Safeway Inc / New Albertsons LP / Albertsons LLC / (Albertsons Safeway LLC)
18	T-Mobile USA Inc.	Mozart Debt Merger Subordinated Inc.
19	Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc.	Equitrans Midstream Corporation
20	AbbVie Inc.	Altice France S.A
21	The Boeing Company	1011778 B.C. Unlimited Liability Company / New Red Finance Inc.
22	Intel Corporation	Bombardier Inc.
23	Microsoft Corporation	Ball Corporation
24	Barclays PLC	United Rentals (North America) Inc.
25	Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group Inc.	Hilton Domestic Operating Co Inc.
26	Walt Disney Company	Calpine Corporation
27	Charter Communications Operating LLC/Charter Communications Operating Capital Corp.	Icahn Enterprises L.P. / Icahn Enterprises Finance Corporation
28	Home Depot Inc	Post Holdings Inc.
29	Walmart Inc	Level 3 Financing Inc.
30	Lowes Companies Inc.	Univision Commmunications Inc.
31	Anheuser-Busch InBev Worldwide Inc.	Vistra Operations Co LLC
32	Pfizer Investment Enterprises Pte Ltd.	The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
33	HCA Inc.	Venture Global LNG Inc.
34	General Motors Financial Company Inc	FirstEnergy Corp.
35	Pacific Gas and Electric Company	Uniti Group LP/Uniti Fiber Holdings Inc/Uniti Group Finance 2019 Inc/CSL Capital LLC
36	Energy Transfer LP	HUB International Ltd.
37	Broadcom Inc	Bath & Body Works Inc
38	BNP Paribas SA	Service Properties Trust
39	Royal Bank of Canada	Carvana Co
40	Bristol-Myers Squibb Company	Transocean Inc.
41	Raytheon Technologies Corporation	Venture Global Calcasieu Pass LLC
42	International Business Machines Corporation	YUM Brands Inc
43	Merck & Co. Inc	Newell Brands Inc.
44	Toyota Motor Credit Corp.	GFL Environmental Inc.
45	Shell International Finance B.V.	Uber Technologies Inc
46	Philip Morris International Inc.	Navient Corporation
47	U.S. Bancorp.	NCL Corporation Ltd.
48	The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation	Standard Buildings Solutions Inc.
49	Exxon Mobil Corporation	Mauser Packaging Solutions Holding Company
50	Pepsico Inc	Vodafone Group PLC

# Downgrades have outpaced upgrades since Q4 2022



Source: S&P Global ratings, Apollo Chief Economist

# US: More downside risk in credit as leveraged loan weakest links increase in Q2



Source: Pitchbook, LCD; Morningstar LSTA US Leveraged Loan Index, Apollo Chief Economist (Data through June 30, 2023) (SD and D - An obligor rated 'SD' (Selective Default) or 'D' has failed to pay one or more of its financial obligations (rated or unrated) when it came due. A 'D' rating is assigned when Standard & Poor's believes that the default will be a general default and that the obligor will fail to pay all or substantially all of its obligations as they come due. An 'SD' rating is assigned when Standard & Poor's believes that the obligor has selectively defaulted on a specific issue or class of obligations, but it will continue to meet its payment obligations on other issues or classes of obligations in a timely manner.)



# Torsten Slok, Ph.D.

Chief Economist

Apollo Global Management
tslok@apollo.com

Torsten Slok joined Apollo in August 2020 as Chief Economist and he leads Apollo's macroeconomic and market analysis across the platform.

Prior to joining, Mr. Slok worked for 15 years as Chief Economist at Deutsche Bank where his team was top ranked in the annual Institutional Investor survey for a decade. Prior to joining Deutsche Bank Mr. Slok worked at the IMF in Washington, DC and at the OECD in Paris.

Mr. Slok has a Ph.D in Economics and has studied at the University of Copenhagen and Princeton University.