

Markets Gained On Optimism - Equity Overview

Optimism deriving from continuing fiscal and monetary stimulus efforts in addition to vaccination progress, drove equities higher in the first quarter. Major equity indices moved higher with the energy, financial and industrial sectors leading in the first quarter.

International developed market indices were mostly positive for the first quarter, with emerging market indices primarily flat to negative amid growing debt concerns. Rising inflation is stoking some hesitation among debt heavy global companies as costs to operate and borrow increase.

As the cost of production materials has increased over the past few months, so has the concern as to how company earnings will be affected. The PPI Index, which measures wholesale production prices for companies has been rising steadily for the past year.

Sources: BEA, Bloomberg, Federal Reserve

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