



RESEARCH

Insights

Monthly Market Metrics and Trends: April

Analyzing Volatility, Market Performance, and Equity and Options Volumes
Plus a Look at a Key Equity Markets Theme for the Month

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Market Musings

- On April 2, President Trump declared a national emergency and introduced tariffs on imports from 90 nations, leading to a significant market sell-off. The S&P 500 fell 11.5% by April 8, dipping briefly below 5,000 that day.
- The temporary pause on higher tariffs for most countries on April 9 resulted in a market rally, but the month continued to experience volatility due to ongoing tariff announcements.
- Despite the ups and downs, the S&P 500 ended April down just 1.9%, spending eighteen days in correction territory. Intraday price swings averaged 162.14, driven primarily by tariff-related news, with the largest spread of 532.91 occurring on April 9.

Market Metrics

- Volatility (VIX): Monthly average 31.97; +46.4% M/M, +98.1% Y/Y
- S&P 500 (Price): Monthly average 5,369.50; -5.5% M/M, +5.0% Y/Y
- Performance (month/year): Best = Tech/Cons S +1.6%/+5.7%; worst = Energy/Cons D, -13.7%/-14.3%
- Equity ADV: Monthly average 19.3 billion shares; +20.7% M/M, +76.2% Y/Y
- Options ADV: Monthly average 59.1 million contracts; +3.8%, +30.0% Y/Y

Market Theme

Oh, What A Month

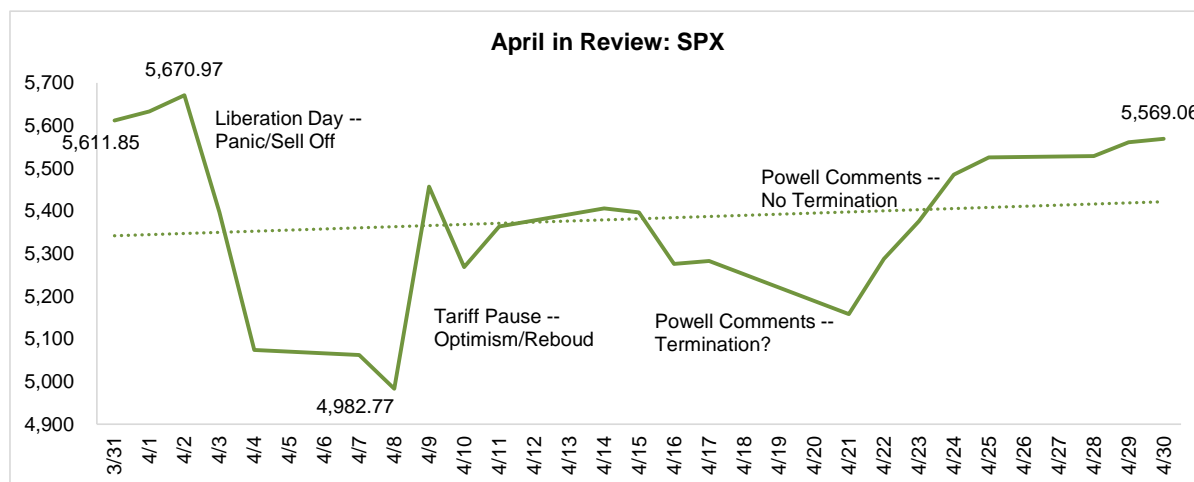
In April 2025, the S&P 500 experienced significant volatility. On April 2, 2025, or Liberation Day, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency due to foreign trade practices and announced a series of reciprocal tariffs on imports from around 90 nations. The baseline tariff was set at 10% for all countries – the universal tariff (which took effect April 5) – with higher tariffs for countries or regions with significant trade deficits with the U.S., such as China and the European Union. The announcement led to an immediate sell off in U.S. equity markets, as investors were concerned about the economic impact of the tariffs on global trade and corporate earnings. By April 8, the S&P 500 was down 11.5% from the start of the month, dipping briefly below 5,000 that day.

On April 9, President Trump authorized a 90-day pause on the higher tariffs for most countries – yet increasing the tariff rate on Chinese imports – while maintaining the universal tariff. This set off a market rally, with the S&P 500 gaining 4.1% from the prior day. That said, continued tariff announcements fueled uncertainty – not just on tariff policy, but around inflation, a potential recession, and the direction of monetary policy – and a roller coaster ride for markets throughout the rest of the month.

Tariff chatter and market sentiment shifted toward the end of the month. On April 22, President Trump made a statement regarding progress on trade agreements with Japan and India, suggesting potential future adjustments to tariffs based on these agreements. The S&P 500 increased 1.5% that day and 3.0% the following day (D/D changes).

Just as tariff announcements took a pause, rhetoric about Fed Chair Powell increased. On April 17, President Trump alluded on social media to Chair Powell's termination, and again on April 21, President Trump urged for the immediate lowering of interest rates by the Fed (as well as making some personal statements about the Chair). Markets declined: S&P 500 -0.7% D/D on April 17, -1.8% on April 21. Then, on April 22, President Trump calmed markets by stating that he had no intention of firing Chair Powell. This was the same day President Trump made the trade statements around Japan and India mentioned above. Markets increased.

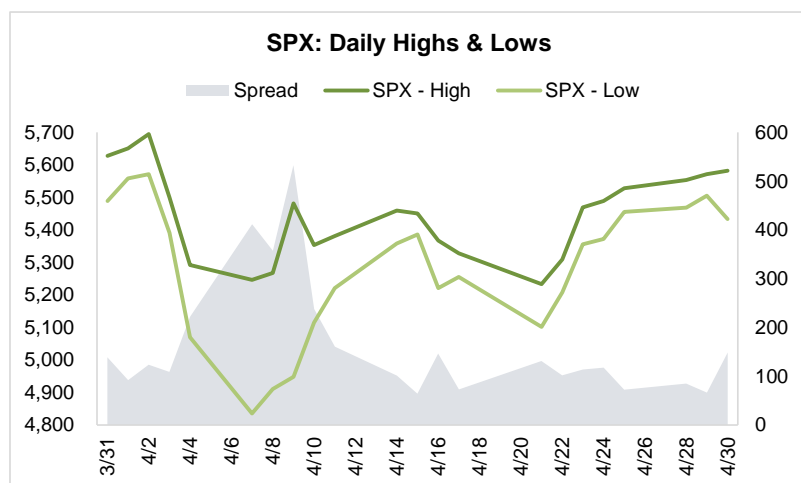
Despite all the turmoil, the S&P 500 ended the month only down -1.1%



Source: Bloomberg, SIFMA estimates

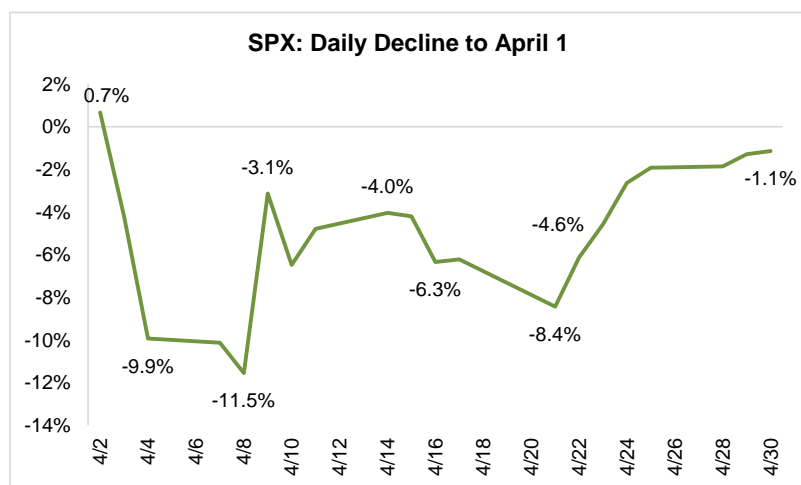
In April, the S&P 500 spent seventeen days in correction territory (-10% to the YTD peak, 6,144.15 on February 19; markets hit correction territory one other day this year on March 13). Uncertainty reigned, and investor sentiment waned, as markets attempted to assess economic conditions and, therefore, how to position portfolios. The S&P 500 has avoided entering bear territory (-20% to the YTD peak), but markets came close for a few days after the original tariff announcement, fearing a prolonged period of economic downturn and potential recession.

Large intraday swings: The large swings in index price were not just seen across the month but intraday as well. The average spread between intraday high and low prices was 165.13 in April. This was 6.6x the average spread going back to 2000 (25.2) and 3.2x the average spread over the last five years (51.7). We note that most of the intraday volatility came in the first half of the month, again driven by tariff announcements. The spread settled towards the end of the month, albeit elevated to historical levels: first-half spread 234.83 versus 101.77 in the second half of the month. The largest spread was 532.91 on April 9.



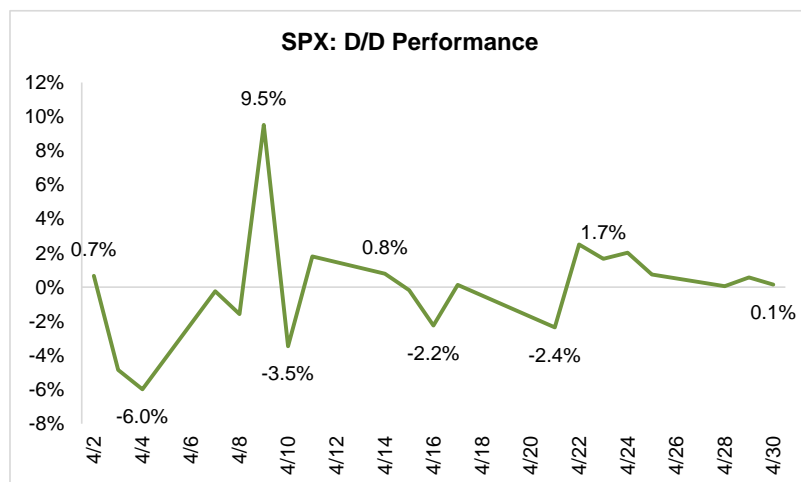
Source: Bloomberg, SIFMA estimates

Since April 1: The split between the first and second half of the month was also clear when looking at daily prices versus the start of the month. The declines began after Liberation Day and grew until peaking on April 8 at -11.5%. The level of the declines ebbed and flowed through the middle of the month, settling toward the end of the month. The declines averaged -1.8% over the last five days of the month.



Source: Bloomberg, SIFMA estimates

Daily returns: The perceived negative then positive tariff announcement pattern also flowed through to investor sentiment, as shown in the daily returns. The first half of the month was more volatile, split between up and down days. In the second half of the month, up days outweighed down days eight to three. Overall, April ended up with thirteen positive return days and eight negative return days. The range of daily returns was greater in the first half of the month as well, ranging from -6.0% to +9.5% versus -2.4% to +2.5% in the second half.



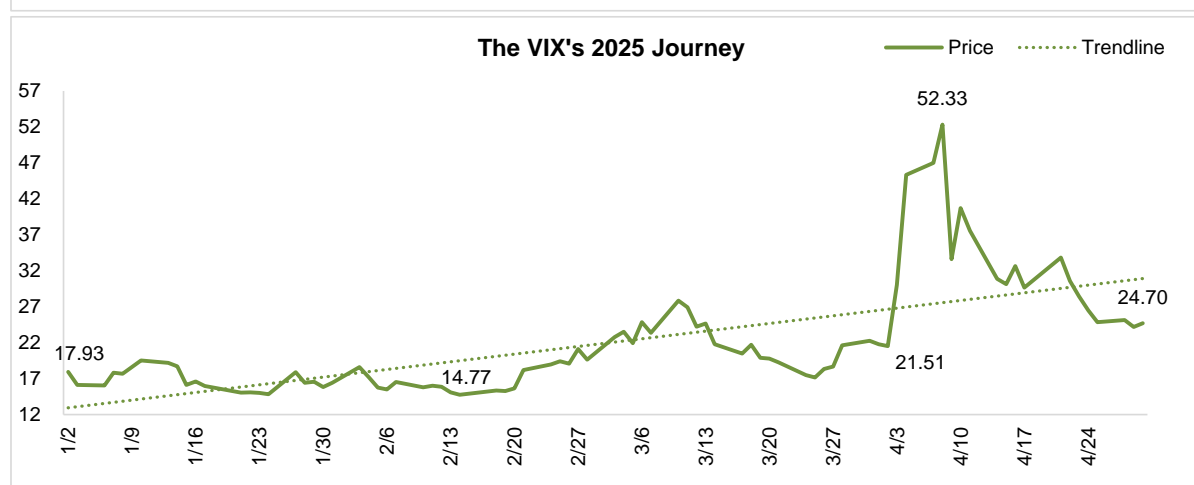
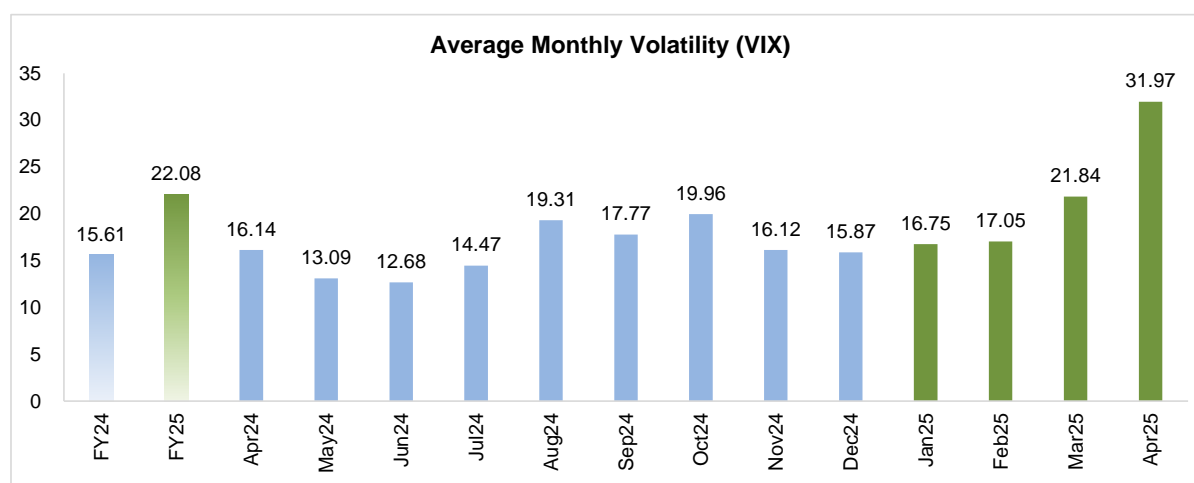
Source: Bloomberg, SIFMA estimates

Market Metrics

In this section, we highlight the monthly market trends for volatility, price, and volumes.

Volatility (VIX)

- Monthly average 31.97
 - +46.4% M/M
 - +98.1% Y/Y
- Monthly peak on the 8th at 52.33, troughed on the 2nd at 21.51

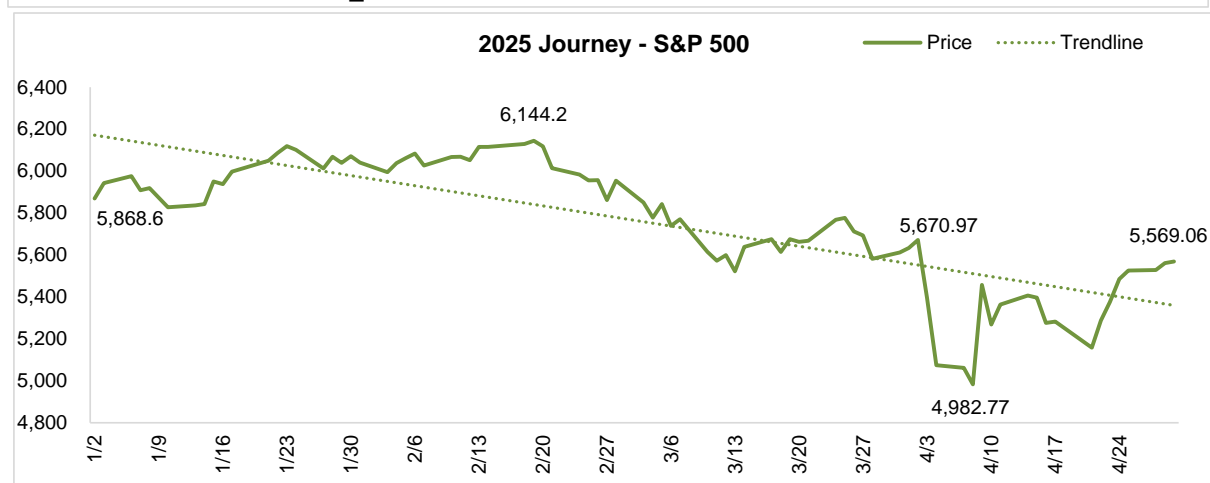
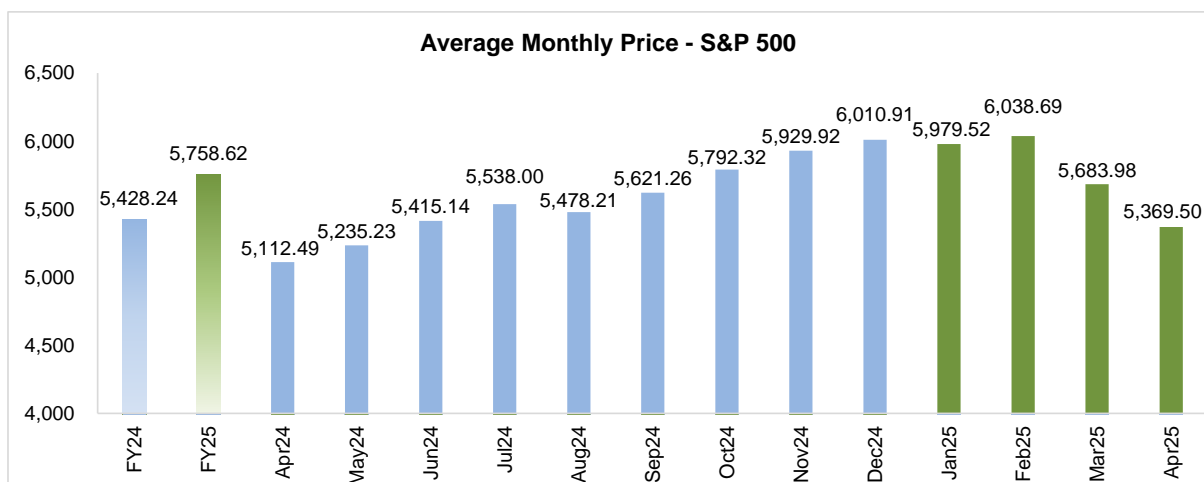


Source: Bloomberg, SIFMA estimates

Note: Data labels depict the start of the year, the last closing price, peaks/troughs for the year and month (if different from the other data points already labelled). When looking at troughs, we do not include days when the market closed early, unless it is the end of the month: July 3, November 28, and December 24.

S&P 500 Index: Price

- Monthly average 5,369.50
 - 5.5% M/M
 - +5.0% Y/Y
- Monthly peak on the 2nd at 5,670.97, troughed on the 8th at 4,982.77

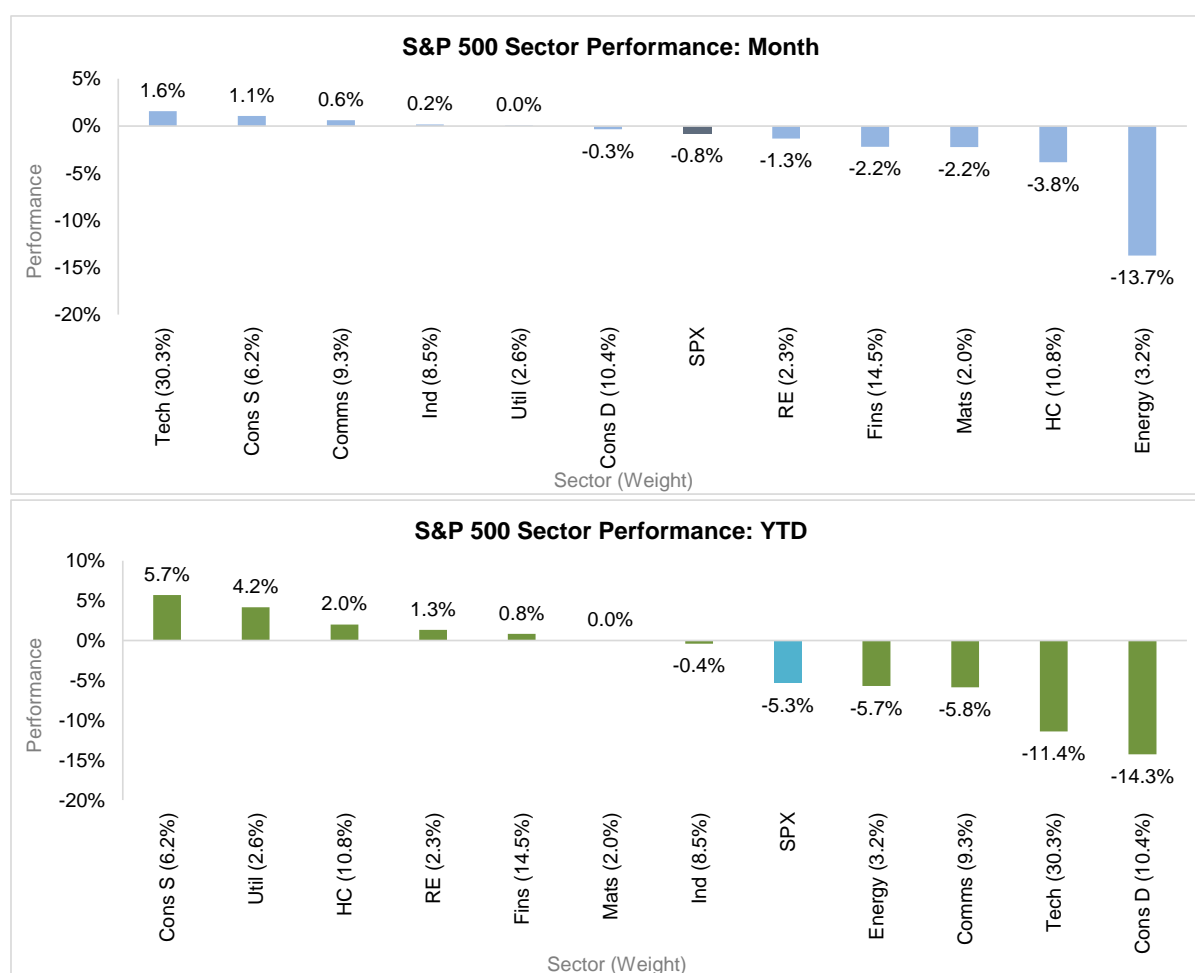


Source: Bloomberg, SIFMA estimates

S&P 500 Index: Sector Breakout

Looking at market performance by sector, we highlight the following:

- Best performing sectors
 - Month = Technology at +1.6% and Consumer Staples at +1.1%
 - YTD = Consumer Staples at +5.7% and Utilities at +4.2%
- Worst performing sectors
 - Month = Energy at -13.7% and Healthcare at -3.8%
 - YTD = Consumer Discretionary at -14.3% and Technology at -11.4%

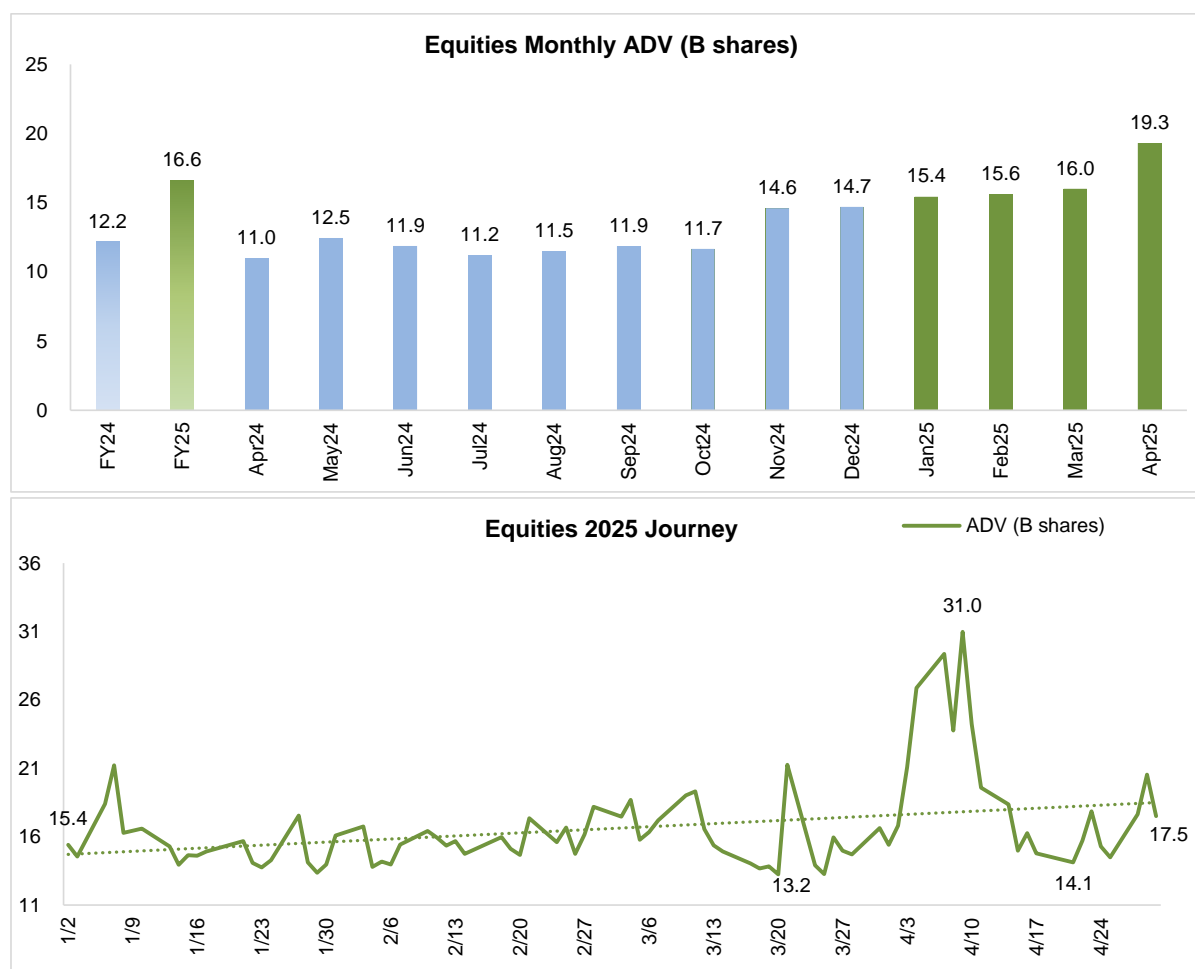


Source: Bloomberg, SIFMA estimates

Note: Cons S = consumer staples, HC = healthcare, Mats = materials, RE = real estate, Ind = industrials, Fins = financials, Tech = technology, Cons D = consumer discretionary, Comms = telecommunications, Util = utilities

Equity Volumes (ADV)

- Monthly average 19.3 billion shares
 - +20.7% M/M
 - +76.2% Y/Y
- Monthly peak on the 9th at 31.0 billion, troughed on the 21st at 14.1 billion
- Monthly average off exchange trading 48.3%; -0.6 pps M/M, +3.9 pps Y/Y

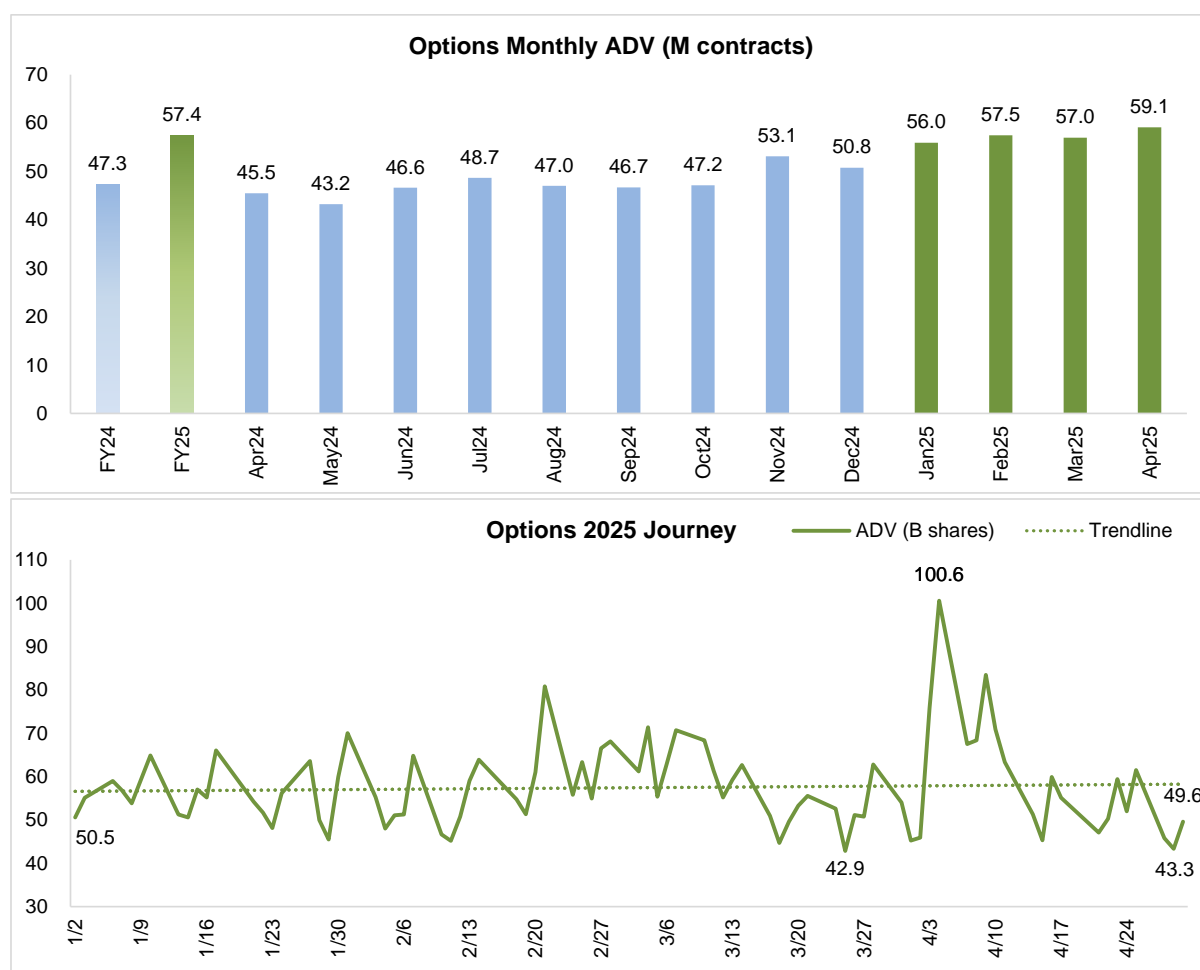


Source: Cboe Global Markets, SIFMA estimates.

Note: Data labels depict the start of the year, the last closing price, peaks/troughs for the year and month (if different from the other data points already labelled). When looking at troughs, we do not include days when the market closed early, unless it is the end of the month: July 3, November 28, and December 24.

Options Volumes (ADV)

- Monthly average 59.1 million contracts
 - +3.8% M/M
 - +30.0% Y/Y
- Monthly peak on the 4th at 100.6 million contracts, troughed on the 29th at 43.3 million contracts
- Monthly equity options 54.0 million contracts (+4.5% M/M, +31.5% Y/Y), index options 5.1 million contracts (-3.7% M/M, +16.3% Y/Y)



Source: Cboe Global Markets, SIFMA estimates

Note: Data labels depict the start of the year, the last closing price, peaks/troughs for the year and month (if different from the other data points already labelled). When looking at troughs, we do not include days when the market closed early, unless it is the end of the month: July 3, November 28, and December 24.

Author

SIFMA Insights

Katie Kolchin, CFA, Managing Director, Head of Research
Matthew Paluzzi, Research Associate

Website: www.sifma.org/insights

Email: kkolchin@sifma.org

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