

Market Comment | Dovish ECB favoured the rebound in European indices

Global Financial Markets Unit 21 Jan 2016

- Mixed labour data in the US. US jobless claims rose (against estimates of decreasing) in the week ended 16 January (by 10K to 293K; consensus: 278K), while continuing claims dropped in the week ended 9 January more than expected (by 56K to 2,208K; consensus: 2,247K). On another front, the Philadelphia Fed business outlook improved more than estimated (to -3.5 points from -10.2; consensus: -5.9).
- The ECB hints at further easing in March. As expected, at today's monetary policy meeting there were no changes in the ECB's monetary policy stance, as the central bank left the key policy rate unchanged at 0.05% and the deposit rate at -0.3%. As regards non-standard measures, the central bank unexpectedly hinted at an easing by the central bank as early as March. In this way, the dovish tone was reinforced and the easing bias was strengthened, as the ECB stated that it "will be necessary to review and possibly reconsider our monetary policy stance," coinciding with the new Staff macroeconomic projections. In particular, Mr Draghi said that the ECB has the "power, the determination and the willingness to act", while he stressed that the Governing Council (GC) was unanimous in today's communication tone. On the economic and inflation outlooks, downside risks have increased.
- Eurozone consumer confidence declined in January unexpectedly (by -0.6 points to -6.3; BBVA -5.6 consensus: -5.7, previous month -5.7) Meanwhile, French business confidence in January rose slightly (by 1 point to 102; BBVAe: 101, consensus: 102), while manufacturing confidence remained unchanged in line with expectations (at 102 points; BBVAe: 102 consensus: 103)
- Dovish ECB favoured the rebound in European indices. The ECB unexpectedly announced a revision of the current assessment at its next meeting (March). The market reacted abruptly to the ECB's statement: yields dropped across the board - narrowing peripheral risk premia - USDEUR broke down through the 1.08 USDEUR threshold, reaching 1.077, and European equity indices went up by 2.5%. While the effect on the FX and equity markets was diluted progressively ahead of the start of the US session, yields went down throughout the session. The dovishness of the ECB's statement could contribute to modify the short-term in sensitive variables - if there are not violent changes in commodity prices in the coming days. Consequently, on the bond markets, European yields dropped, led by the periphery (GER 10Y: -3bp, FRA 10Y: -5bp, ITA 10Y: -9bp, SPA 10Y: -6bp, POR 10Y: -5bp), underpinned by today's ECB meeting. As a result, peripheral risk premia narrowed (ITA: -6bp, SPA: -3bp, POR: -2bp). Meanwhile, US treasury yields remained unchanged. On equity markets, European índices rebounded today after yesterday's huge losses, and despite the weak Asian session (Euro Stoxx: +2.0%, DAX: +1.9%, IBEX: +1.8%, CAC: +1.9%, MIB: +4.0%), boosted by Mario Draghi's speech and the increase in oil prices (Brent and WTI: +4.7%,). European banks rebounded, after registering big falls earlier in the week due to bad loans fears, as the SSM endorsed an NPL questionnaire from. Mr. Draghi to certain European banks. Today, Mr. Draghi calmed the doubts about the banking sector, arguing that "no new unexpected provision or new unexpected request for more capital will be made by the supervisor", while



he added that the "NPL questionnaire was not an initiative that would push banks to deal with NPLs urgently, and we know it takes time". On the other hand, the US equity markets rose (S&P: +0.8%, Dow: +1.1%). On FX markets, the USD appreciated against other major currencies (EUR: -0.59%, JPY: -0.6%). EM currencies showed a mixed performance, as some appreciated against the USD (COP: +1.7%, CLP: +0.6%, TRY: +0.5%), helped by the recovery in commodity prices, while others depreciated on the back of idiosyncratic vulnerabilities (Russian ruble: -2.0%, breaking through historically low levels again, and Brazilian real: -1.1% after the central bank left the interest rate unchanged against expectations of an increase). Meanwhile, European emerging currencies depreciated today, due to the increasing pressure of a weak EUR on their trade balances (HUN: -0.33% PLN: -0.26% CZK: -0.49%).

Update 17.30 CET 21 January, 2015 Table1



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Flash

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*CDS, EMBI & MSCI indices with one day delay
**Credit spread (BAA) with two days delay

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