

Market Comment | Central banks and oil prices as main drivers last week

Global Financial Markets Unit 05 Feb 2016

- Worse-than-expected payrolls in the US but with increasing wages. US non-farm payrolls in January increased below estimates (by 151K; consensus: 190K; previous month: 262K), but the manufacturing payrolls rose against estimates of decreasing (by 29K; consensus: -2K; previous: 13K), helping the unemployment rate to fall slightly unexpectedly (at 4.9%; consensus: 5.0%). In addition, despite the slowdown in jobs growth, wages rose more than expected (by 0.5% MoM; consensus: 0.3%), which were the most positive data today.
- · Central banks and oil prices as main drivers last week. Uncertainty in financial markets remained during the week. The main market drivers were the high volatility in oil prices and the dovish tone across central banks in the developed markets. Last week's rebound in oil prices lost steam, hampered by worsethan-expected confidence prints in both China and the US (Brent: -1.2% WTx: -6.1%). Moreover, the volatility of oil prices surged (+7.8%, reaching new highs) on unconfirmed rumours of posible cuts in oil output. However, the second part of the week's market trend was determined by the dovish comment from the main central banks' officials, that paved the way for increasing expectations of a posible period of competitive easing among the main central banks. Following last week's cut by the BoJ to negative rates, William Dudley (NY Fed president) warned about the negative effects of the external environment and extra tightening in US monetary policy on the US economy. This had a significant effect on the US dollar, which decisively broke the EURUSD 1.10 barrier and erased the market's expectations of a second rate hike in March. However, Mario Draghi also reinforced the dovish tone - as revealed in the last communiqué from the ECB Governing Council - with a speech in which he stressed the bank's total commitment to its inflation target. Last but not least, the BoE decided to keep UK rates at 0.5% for at least a further year, with a very accommodative tone: the monetary authority voted nine to zero to keep rates unchanged (previous meetings had been eight to one). However, in the end the Fed won the game, and the USD ended the week showing substantial depreciation against G-10 currencies, although it appreciated slightly after the release of January's payroll data. Moreover, the yen returned to its levels prior to the announcement of the BoJ's negative reserve interest rate. (EUR: +2.81%, GBP: +1.55%, JPY: +3.44%). Meanwhile, EM currencies showed a mixed performance against the US dollar (RUB: -2.4%, BRL: +2.0%, MXN: -1.6%, COP: -1.1%, CLP: +1.0% TRY: +1.2%) with those most linked to oil prices depreciating due to the fluctuations in the oil price. The US bond market reflected the dovish tone of the Fed's official statement, dragging US Treasury interest rates lower across all tenors (2Y: -4bp, 10Y: -5bp). On the other hand, Draghi's comments had minimal impact on European Core yields, which ended the week broadly flat. However, peripheral yields surged (ITA 10Y: +14bp, SPA 10Y: +13bp, POR 10Y: +25bp), widening the peripheral risk premia (ITA: +17bp, SPA: +16bp, POR: +28bp). On the equity markets, European indices plunged during the week (Euro Stoxx: -5.5%, IBEX: -3.6%, DAX: -5.3%, CAC: -4.9%), mainly hampered by the Energy sector - due to rating agencies' negative views and the confusion over oil prices and Supplies - and the financial sector. In the same vein, US equity markets declined (S&P: -2.8%, Dow: -1.5%) dragged by the worse-than-expected 4Q corporate earnings.



Update 17.30 CET 05 February, 2015 Table1



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*CDS, EMBI & MSCI indices with one day delay

**Credit spread (BAA) with two days delay

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