

# Market Comment | Cautious mood in markets ahead of Thursday's UK referendum

Global Financial Markets Unit  
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- **German high court rules in favour of the ECB's OMT programme.** After years of judicial battles, and after the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled a year ago that the OMT was in accordance with EU law, the German institution recognises that the current scheme of the OMT does not violate German Federal law regarding the monetary financing of euro zone governments, but with several caveats, which somewhat limit the OMT firepower, such as a stipulation to the effect that the Bundesbank can implement the OMT only if the amount of the purchase is limited from the outset ([see](#)). The OMT was launched on September 2012, and its announcement was a powerful tool to address the euro zone fragmentation risk and maintained the euro as a stable currency. Although it has never been used, its legality was always on the table. Although the impact of today's GCC on financial markets was contained, a contrarian decision could have added some pressure on EZ assets ahead of the Brexit referendum.
- **Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen's testimony before the Senate was broadly unchanged from the last FOMC statement.** Ms Yellen stated that the economy has made further progress towards the Federal Reserve's objective of maximum employment. However, the pace of improvement in the labour market appears to have slowed more recently, suggesting that the cautious approach to adjusting monetary policy remains appropriate. Moreover, she cautioned again about the vulnerability of the global economy: China's slowdown and the UK referendum, while also warning that in the current environment investors' perception of risk-taking can change abruptly.
- **ECB's Mario Draghi defended all the monetary policy action taken and said the ECB will do more if needed to revive price growth.** While the effect of stimulus policies is finally showing through in a more robust pick-up in non-construction investment, he warned that total investment is still below pre-crisis levels, urging countries with healthy public finances to deploy measures to spur investment. He also warned that the risks are tilted to the downside and said he is ready to make use of all instruments available in the event of an unwanted tightening of financing conditions altering the mid-term outlook.
- **Cautious mood in markets ahead of Thursday's UK referendum.** The positive mood in financial markets early today - caused by yesterday's decreasing odds of Brexit - was reinforced by the better-than-expected macroeconomic data in the EZ (better-than-expected ZEW in Germany and EZ) and the German high court decision regarding the OMT programme. Nonetheless, the positive mood moderated as a new round of polls on Brexit was released. It showed an extremely narrow difference between the "leave" and "remain" options and ensured high volatility in financial markets in upcoming sessions. As we anticipated yesterday, uncertainty regarding the Brexit issue will remain well alive until Thursday's referendum as the flow of new information continues. Implied volatility in main assets continued to decline but remained above the current year average (implied volatility in the Eurostoxx 50, 34.5%, S&P500 18.34 % and EURGBP 18.82% ).
- **Against this backdrop bonds remained almost unchanged despite Draghi's and Yellen's**

**remarks** (US 10Y -1 bp GER 10Y: 0 bps). In the same line, peripheral curves halted yesterday's falls and did not register significant changes. Nonetheless, Greek bonds yields increased although the ESM today authorised the first €7.5 billion disbursement of the €10.3 billion second tranche of ESM financial assistance to Greece. In equity markets, developed countries' indices increased modestly, led by Asia and Europe (Euro Stoxx +0.8%, Nikkei +1.3 % S&P +0.1 %). In FX markets, the US dollar appreciated against its main peers (euro -0.47%, Japanese yen -0.62%, British pound -0.18%). Meanwhile, EM currencies registered mixed performances against the USD ( BRL: -0.3%, CLP: +0.5%, COP: -0.1%, MXN +0%) despite the downward trend in commodity prices (Brent -1.3% and copper -0.2%).

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Table 1





Current level and changes at daily, weekly, monthly and annual frequencies

Daily markets (changes in bp)

US 2yr 6.75 (0.23) (1) (30)  
US 5yr 1.8 (0.04) (0.08)  
US 10yr 1.08 (0.17) (4) (36)

Japan 10yr 2.1 (0.1) (1) (31.41)  
OECD 2yr 4.05 (0.1) (4) (34)  
OECD 5yr 2.4 (0.1) (3) (32.42)  
OECD 10yr 3.05 (0.1) (3) (34.68)

Belgium 10yr 5.44 (3) (2) (41) (43)  
France 5.92 (2) (1) (31) (45)  
Germany 5.92 (2) (1) (31) (45)  
Italy 5.92 (2) (1) (31) (45)

Spain 5.92 (2) (1) (31) (45)  
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Country risk (changes in bp)

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CDS, EMBI & MSCI indices with one day delay

\*\*Credit spread (BAA) with two days delay

\*\*\*S&P GSCI with one day delay

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