

Market Comment | Market volatility rebounded again amid a new drop in oil prices

Global Financial Markets Unit
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- **Worse-than-expected CPI data in the US.** US CPI decreased in December against estimations of remaining unchanged (by -0.1% MoM), while in annual terms it rose less than expected (by 0.7%YoY; consensus: 0.8%; previous: 0.5%). On another front, housing starts declined in December unexpectedly (to 1,149K from 1,179K; consensus: 1,200K), while building permits dropped less than estimated (by 50K to 1,232K; consensus: 1,200K).
- **Market volatility rebounded again amid a new drop in oil prices.** Commodity prices continue as one of the main drivers of financial market behaviour, that suffered extraordinary volatility again (VIX: +10.9%). Oil prices plunged again today to their lowest levels since 2003, below USD27/bbl (Brent: -4.1%, WTI: -5.7%). Behind this new turndown could be the worries about a widening oversupply - waiting for the API weekly crude oil US stock figures later today - and the release of worse-than-expected fresh capital outflows data from China, that could add some doubts about financial stability and could prompt the PBoC to prevent further RMB deterioration. The release of slightly worse-than-expected prices data in US also boosted bond markets. Against this backdrop, European equity markets dropped across the board, awaiting tomorrow's ECB meeting, in which no change is expected in monetary policy (Euro Stoxx: -3.3%, DAX: -2.8%, IBEX: -3.2%, CAC: -3.4%). The energy sector and (especially) the banking sector were the worst performers, with trading in Monte dei Paschi di Siena halted in the session after it fell by more than 22%; Italian banks extended their losses, as they were under pressure after the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) signaled its priorities for 2016 in scrutinising the NPL portfolios of European banks with high NPL ratios. In the same vein, US indices declined (S&P 500: -2.5%, Dow: -2.8%), on the disappointing macroeconomic data releases. Asian markets also suffered today (Nikkei: -3.7%, Shanghai: -1.0%). On the bond markets, safe-haven yields decreased (US 10Y: -10bp, GER 10Y: -7bp, FRA 10Y: -4bp), fuelled by risk aversion. Meanwhile, European periphery yields increased, led by Portugal (ITA 10Y: +8bp, SPA 10Y: +7bp, POR 10Y: +14bp). As a result, peripheral risk premia surged (ITA: +15bp, SPA: +14bp, POR: +21bp). On FX markets, the USD depreciated against other major currencies (JPY: +1.09%, GBP: +0.05%), while those most linked to oil prices depreciated against the US dollar (AUD: -1.0%, NOK: -0.78%). EM currencies also depreciated against the USD (BRL: -1.0%, RUB: -4.1% and hitting a historical low, COP: -2.4%, MXN: -1.7%, CLP: -0.5%), hampered by the renewed deterioration in commodity prices.

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Table1

*CDS, EMBI & MSCI indices with one day delay

**Credit spread (BAA) with two days delay

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