

Market Comment | Talks about potential cuts in oil output increase market volatility

Global Financial Markets Unit
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- **Worse-than-expected orders in the US.** Durable goods orders' preliminary data plunged in December (by -5.1% MoM; consensus: -0.7%), and ex-transportation they declined more than expected (by -1.2% MoM; consensus: -0.1%). Meanwhile, pending home sales remained almost unchanged against estimates of increasing (by +0.1% MoM; consensus: +0.9%). On another front, US jobless claims dropped more than expected in the week ended 23 January (by 16K to 278K; consensus: 281K), while continuing claims rose more than expected in the week ended 16 January (by 49K to 2,268K; consensus: 2,218K).
- **Mixed data in the EZ.** Eurozone consumer confidence final data confirmed the deterioration in December (by 0.6 points). Meanwhile German CPI preliminary data in January increased slightly more than estimated (by +0.5% YoY; consensus: +0.4%; previous: +0.3%), and this improvement was due mainly to the slowdown in the fall of energy prices (by -5.8% YoY; previous: -6.5%).
- **FOMC maintained the Federal funds rate range at 0.25-0.50% and showed a slight dovish tone in yesterday's meeting.** The statement highlights economic vulnerability but the FOMC is still downplaying inflation concerns. Members are likely to reduce policy path expectations in revised projections to come in March. We continue to expect only two additional increases in 2016, closing out the year at 1.0%. ([see](#))
- **Talks about potential cuts in oil output increase market volatility.** Yesterday's FOMC statement - that showed the Committee to be slightly dovish, due to a moderate increase in household spending and business fixed investment - was not the best support to fuel any optimism in financial markets. It was received with a delay to the expectations of the next rate hike (the probability being assigned to a hike in March is now only 20%), and consequently the US Treasury yields went down after the release (2Y: -6bp, 10Y: -6bp). Although the markets have delayed expectations of the next rate rise, the concerns about the pace of internal activity growth dragged the main equity indices, that fell by 1.0-1.5% yesterday. The pessimism was widespread throughout markets, judging by the performance of Asian markets (Nikkei -0.71% and Shanghai composite -2.92%, falling close to 2014's low levels), and the negative opening by the European indices. At midday, there was an abrupt rebound in oil prices (WTI: +2.6%, Brent: +2.7%), on the back of the Russian energy minister showing his willingness to hold discussions with other oil exporters to cut the oil production, fueled the performance of risk assets - especially those correlated with oil prices - but this effect was almost entirely diluted within an hour after OPEC delegates said that there were no plans to hold these talks (there are some rumours about an OPEC meeting in February pending that have yet to be confirmed, but at the moment the next scheduled OPEC meeting is on 2 June). Against this backdrop, European equity markets fell today (Euro Stoxx: -2.1%, DAX: -2.4%, IBEX: -1.7%, CAC: -1.3%, MIB: -3.5%), despite the improvement in oil prices and the Fed's dovish tone. Furthermore, the decrease was underpinned by some worse-than-expected corporate earnings and by the bad performance of the Italian banking sector (that fell by between 5% and 9% today). The main US

equity indices remained unchanged and did not recover yesterday's losses (S&P: +0.1%, Dow: -0.2%). On the bond markets, US treasury yields remained broadly unchanged after yesterday's falls while European safe-haven yields declined (GER 10Y: -4bp, FRA: -2bp) and peripheral bonds remained stable. On FX markets, the USD depreciated against other major currencies (EUR: +0.5%, GBP: +0.89%), as the FOMC statement highlighted the economic vulnerability. EM currencies appreciated against the US dollar (RUB: +1.9%, COP: +1.6%, BRL: +0.2%, MXN: +1.0%, CLP: +0.7%), helped mainly by the sharp rebound in oil 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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