

# Market Comment | Bond rally due to increasing global growth concerns

Global Financial Markets Unit  
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- **Bond rally due to increasing global growth concerns.** After last week's disappointing US payrolls data, global growth concerns again hit global markets on the back of worse-than-expected China trade and Japan activity indicators, increasing global market risk premiums. Moreover, the uncertain outcome of the Brexit referendum and the US elections are also weighing on financial markets. The German financial minister argued for caution about Brexit, saying "Brexit could lead to referendums in other EU countries, therefore destabilising the whole region."
- **The most sizeable move took place in bond markets**, where the main developed country markets (Japan, Germany and Switzerland) reached new all-time lows. The German 10Y yield touched a new record low (0.1%). Apart from the gloomy global economic outlook and uncertainties about Brexit, technical factors might have been playing a role in low German yields: i) The German sovereign yield curve is below the ECB's deposit rate (-0.4%) up to the 6Y tenor, preventing the ECB from purchasing these bonds and forcing it to focus its bond purchases on the 7-10 tenor, pushing down yields of these tenors. Moreover, ii) the start of the Corporate Purchase Programme may also have contributed to the drag on German yields, as declining corporate yields make sovereign yields more attractive in relative terms. The average yield on euro corporate investment grade bonds has declined since the ECB's announcement in March (by 29 bps to 0.74% as measured by Bloomberg's investment grade euro corporate index). Meanwhile, peripheral risk had a mixed performance, increasing by 11 bps in Italy, as the local elections increased the political risk in the country, while remaining broadly unchanged in Spain. As a result, the 10Y yield spread between Spain and Italy narrowed (to 4 bps from 14 bps last Friday). Although Greece is close to getting the first disbursement of €7.5bn of the second tranche of the bailout, the Greek risk premium widened due to the risk-off mood prevailing in the market. US yields have also declined this week, ending the week close to their lowest levels in 2016 (1.65%), although Yellen's speech on Monday was not as dovish as the market might have expected after the disappointing employment data.
- **The risk aversion sentiment also weighed on equity markets**, which declined across the board, but US indices remained close to their highest level (Eurostoxx -2.3% DAX -2.5% CAC -2.4% Ibex -3%). The acceleration of the downward trend in sovereign yields weighed heavily on insurance companies and on the banking sector.
- **USD depreciated against its main peers**, (EUR: -0.65% GBP: -1.16% JPY: -0.3%). The GBP was favoured by the release of a new batch of polls that increased the odds in favour of the "remain" option in the Brexit vote. Yet uncertainty remains (the 1M implied volatility steady at high levels). Commodity prices also plunged. Downward trend in commodity prices such as copper and silver in a risk-averse context, while oil prices remained almost unchanged. Consequently gold prices increased. As a result EM currencies registered mixed performance against the USD (RUB: +0.8% BRL: +2.8% CLP: -0.1% COP: +1.5% MXN: +0.8%).

**FOMC preview:**

June's FOMC meeting holds at least some chance of a rate hike announcement, despite the fact that the latest employment report put a damper on the Fed's plans to move forward. Chair Yellen mentioned in a recent speech that "Although this labor market report was, on balance, concerning, let me emphasize that one should never attach too much significance to any single monthly report. Other timely indicators from the labor market have been more positive." Even with this disappointing job growth, labor market conditions remain healthy and near the Fed's maximum employment objectives. Furthermore, inflation continues to move gradually towards their target, the global outlook has improved, and financial market volatility has declined. Therefore, the Fed should feel comfortable moving ahead with another rate increase on the soon side, especially considering that this is only the second of (hopefully) many increases. Delaying even further makes the next increase that much more difficult, paving the way for more excuses to keep kicking the can down the road.

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Table 1







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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