

Market Comment | FOMC decision spurs financial markets

Global Financial Markets Unit
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- **Despite an increase in the number of dissenters, the FOMC remains on course for December.** As expected, the FOMC in its September meeting chose to further delay rate increases for a sixth consecutive meeting, judging that conditions were closer to warranting policy normalisation, but deciding “for the time being, to wait for further evidence of continued progress toward its objectives.” The indefinite pause leaves the federal funds rate at 0.25-0.50%. Despite having three dissenting votes, Yellen confirmed that **short-run expectations are unifying around one increase this year.** However, the committee’s federal funds rate projections now imply a slower pace of normalisation. Uncertainty over the sustainability of the current recovery and growing divergence of opinions on the “new normal” underlie the downshift. As a result, a more **pessimistic view of longer run potential and lower equilibrium interest rate projections increase probability of a more gradual tightening cycle** (see). After the FOMC meeting, the implied market probabilities of an interest rate hike in December are 57%.
- Despite Fed Chair Yellen’s hinting at one potential hike this year, the Fed’s “dot plot” showed that the number of rate hikes in 2017 has been reduced. As a result, a positive sentiment was felt in financial markets, spurring risk-taking strategies and reducing markets’ implied risk measures such as the implied volatility in the equity market (VIX -7.4%, V2X -14%).
- The bond markets reflected the market view of central banks as being slightly more inclined to continue with monetary stimulus, as the **yield of government bonds decreased strongly across the board, especially long-term yields** (10YUS -4 bps, 10YGER -10 bps, 10YFRA -10 bps). Meanwhile the peripheral risk premium remained stable.
- In this line, **risk-taking mood was reflected in the main equity indices, which registered a sharp rebound**, especially in the European indices (Euro Stoxx50 +2.3%, Dax +2.2%, S&P500 +0.5%, Dow Jones: +0.7%). The European banking sector performed neutrally against the market, after the positive session seen yesterday after the BoJ’s decision to aim at yield curve control, avoiding going deeper into negative rates that might weigh on banking sector profitability.
- The **USD slightly depreciated against its main peers** (EUR +0.39%, GBP +0.4%) after the Fed’s decision. The weaker dollar coupled with yesterday’s encouraging US crude oil inventories data, weighed on today’s oil price rise (+1.6%). **EM currencies appreciated across the board** (PLN +0.7%, MXN +0.9%, CLP +1%, TRY +0.4%, COP +0.8%), favoured by both the Fed’s unchanged decision and the upward trend in oil prices.

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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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