

# Market Comment | Markets little changed as ECB holds stance

Global Financial Markets Unit  
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- **As expected, the ECB remained on hold.** Today's ECB meeting provided little news apart from curbing expectations of tapering. Decisions have been postponed to December, as widely expected, and no clues were provided on the discussion of QE extension or technical changes to cope with bond scarcity problems. We continue to expect the ECB to announce an extension of QE by December.
- Financial markets started the session in relatively calm mood on the back of the **US presidential debate**, which did not bring any significant modification of the expected results in next month's election. Nonetheless volatility followed **Mario Draghi press conference**. Both the 10Y German yield and the EUR surged immediately after Mr. Draghi said that an extension of QE had not been discussed. However, both declined later as the ECB president denied rumours of talk of tapering. He attributed the rumours to "a random statement by someone who doesn't have any information about what is going on at the bank" and later to "uninformed sources", suggesting that those rumours should not be heeded (the German 10Y bund -3 bps, EUR -0.4% against the USD).
- **Despite the fall in oil prices (Brent -2.3%, Wtx -2%) after yesterday's rebound, markets remained in moderately positive mood** and volatility continued its downward trend (VDAX -3.56%, VSTOXX -5%), pushing up risk asset prices. European equity markets registered a positive performance (Euro Stoxx +0.6%, Dax +0.5%, Ibex35 +1.2%) underpinned, among other things, by both lower yields and a cheaper EUR. Moreover, the banking sector (EZ banks +1.9%) outperformed once again. On another front, US stock prices were almost flat (S&P500 -0.3%), while Asian stocks rose - especially in Japan (Nikkei +1.39%).
- The slight upward trend in **sovereign bond yields** across the board in the early morning was curbed by the ECB meeting, and yields **dropped at the end of the session**, with no significant changes in sovereign risk premiums. The only exception was Portugal's yields, which increased (10YPOR +2 bps), as Draghi reminded that Portuguese government bonds would be ineligible as collateral for monetary policy operations if DBRS downgraded the country's sovereign debt rating tomorrow. The 10Y UK yield fluctuated, ahead of the conclusion of the EU summit later today, the first that Theresa May will attend, although no discussion about Brexit trade agreements is expected.
- **In FX markets, the USD appreciated against its main peers** (EUR -0.4%, JPY -0.5%, GBP -0.4%) on the back of positive economic data (both higher-than-expected Philadelphia Fed Manufacturing index and Existing Home Sales), supporting the Fed's interest rate hike probabilities of close to 70% for the December meeting. Meanwhile, oil prices lost the significant ground gained yesterday, probably in a profit-taking move after yesterday's market rally. Consequently, EM currencies depreciated (MXN -0.5%, CLP -0.3%, COP -0.6%), with the exception of the TRY, which appreciated (+0.2%) in the wake of the unexpected decision of Turkey's central bank to hold interest rates unchanged.

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Table 1



Source: Bloomberg, Datastream and Haver



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\* With one day delay

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