

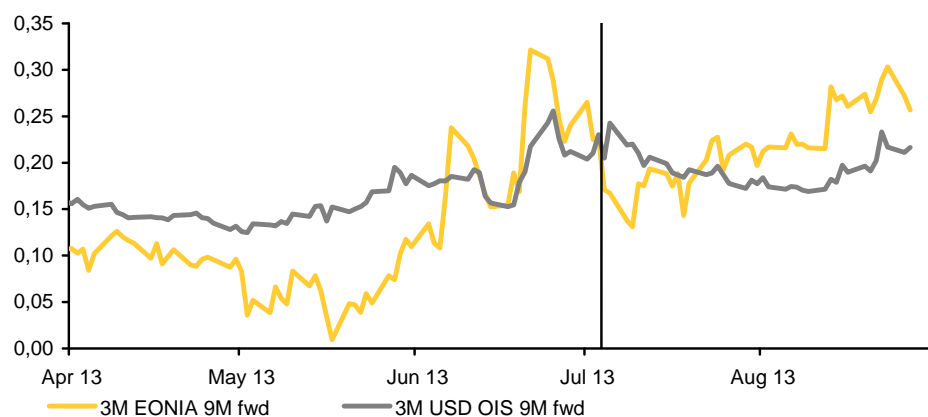
FX Alpha

27 August 2013

Give me the money

Give me the money. EUR-USD remains above 1.33 due to doubts about ECB’s forward guidance and disappointing US data. The fact that further aid for Greece has reached the German election campaign is unlikely to pressure the cross. However, due to the impressive return of EUR longs the downside seems vulnerable.

CHART 1: Forward Guidance not really credible
Money market futures, vertical mark: announcement of “forward guidance through the ECB



Source: Commerzbank Research

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G10 Highlights. Long positions in EUR-CHF seem attractive. There is no idiosyncratic yen strength. Riksbank won’t switch back into a more dovish stance.

FX Metrics. We use correlation forecasts to construct optimized carry trades. Based on this we outline a trade idea on carry trades.

EM Highlights. TRY to remain weak despite CBRT’s efforts. Rate decision and GDP release in Brazil. Investors should tread carefully when it comes to initiating long ILS-positions.

Tactical trade recommendations. Establish long USD-ZAR positions.

Technical Analysis. The US Dollar Index remains bid while trading above the 80.50 June low.

Event calendar. Some important data due in Japan ahead of the next BoJ meeting at the beginning of September.

Give me the money

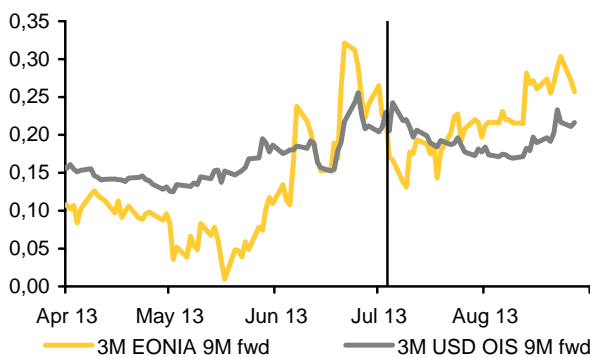
EUR-USD remains above 1.33 due to doubts about ECB’s forward guidance and disappointing US data. The fact that further aid for Greece has reached the German election campaign is unlikely to pressure the cross. However, due to the impressive return of EUR longs the downside seems vulnerable.

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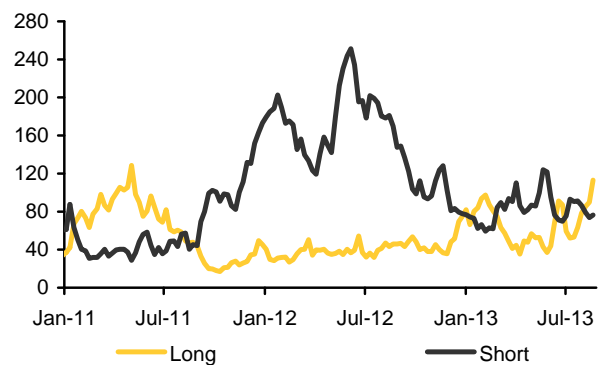
The FX market did not really take the ECB's forward guidance seriously and there are increasing doubts about an imminent Fed tapering following the latest disastrous US macro data (new home sales, durable goods orders). Against this backdrop EUR-USD continues to trade above 1.33 even though it is still obvious that the two most important central banks will soon move into opposite directions. Is it possible that EUR-USD will now come under pressure on a different front? The debate about further aid for Greece is certainly gathering momentum and has also reached the German election campaign after German finance minister Wolfgang Schäuble mentioned a third aid package. While another aid package is pretty likely, most of the finance ministers are opposing a renewed haircut due to concerns about the bond market reaction. Athens on the other hand has made it clear that it does not care where the money comes from as long as there is further aid (ideally in the shape of the ESM covering the cost of the bank recapitalisation which would reduce the state debt by 50 billion EUR). In this context Athens is sounding increasingly confident. That is also likely to be due to the fact that Greece is now recording a primary budget surplus, i.e. disregarding the interest payments the budget is no longer in deficit. A primary surplus is more than merely putting a gloss on the figures. Above all a primary surplus means that a country can seriously consider a default. Even though the Greek bargained up to the last minute during the negotiations for the previous aid programmes, they too are likely to have realised that due to their then primary budget deficit they would have had to impose even stricter austerity measures in case of the negotiations failing and a resulting default than was the case under the aid programmes agreed upon in the end. Things are different this time round and this is likely to affect the negotiating position of the donor countries. As strange as it may sound, but Greece, whose state finances are so disastrous that (including the haircut) the country has received the equivalent of EUR 30,000 for every inhabitant does have more pull. The danger of the negotiations actually failing is nonetheless likely to be miniscule. Irrespective of the election campaign there is no quantitatively serious opposition against further aid payments in Germany. And the FX market agrees with Athens on this point: it does not matter where the money comes from, as long as it arrives. And there is no doubting that! The recent CFTC data confirms that with an impressive return of EUR longs. However, this euro optimism also entails some risks, as it has to be continuously supported by fundamental reasons. So EUR-USD might react notably should markets be disappointed.

CHART 2: Forward Guidance not really credible
 Money market futures, vertical mark: announcement of "forward guidance through the ECB"



Source: Commerzbank Research

CHART 3: Unusually high EUR longs
 Directional EUR positions of non-commercial IMM traders, in '000 contracts



Sources: Commerzbank Research, CFTC

G10 Highlights

Long positions in EUR-CHF seem attractive. There is no idiosyncratic yen strength. Riksbank won't switch back into a more dovish stance.

CHF: Currently it seems rather easy to find a strategy to trade EUR-CHF as the cross is kept in a range between 1.2300 and 1.2380. On the one hand European macro data surprised on the upside on the other hand the CHF benefits from rising risk aversion. The state of the Swiss economy does not play much of a role against this backdrop. And the same applies to the rising inflation rate. The main concern for the Swiss National Bank when implementing the minimum rate in EUR-CHF has been deflationary pressures. In July now, the inflation rate left negative territory for the first time since almost two years. But do not get caught on the wrong foot by betting on the SNB to skip the 1.20 floor. The SNB will not take any changes to create renewed appreciation pressures on the CHF. That said the downside in EUR-CHF is still capped. With EUR-CHF currently trading around 1.23 adopting some long positions in the cross seems attractive.

JPY: The high yielding currencies are under fire from all directions at present, while the outlook for the yen on the other hand is getting increasingly positive. First of all the expectation of a normalisation of US monetary policy is damaging the high yielding G10 currencies (AUD, NZD, NOK) – similar to the damage it does to the EM currencies. Moreover increased geopolitical risks (Egypt, Syria...) are no doubt a reason for many FX market participants to look for “safe havens” (JPY, CHF). And regarding the JPY one should keep in mind that fundamental reasons do not matter when it comes to deciding whether a currency is a safe haven. For the markets the attractive time profile of safe haven currency yields compensates for the yield disadvantage. That means that it makes little sense to look for fundamental reasons behind the recent yen strength. As our factor model illustrates the gradually lower USD-JPY prices since early July are due to USD weakness and risk-off – and merely gloss over the idiosyncratic JPY weakness.

SEK: Things are going to get really interesting for SEK as of tomorrow, as that is when the sentiment indicators are going to be published, followed by retail sales on Thursday. Riksbank's last rate meeting took place on 3rd July, with the next one after the summer recess following on Thursday next week. Just as a reminder: in July Riksbank had raised the rate path marginally thus signalling that a further rate cut has become less likely. The economic data since the July meeting has been mixed. Initially the recession in the euro zone still had an effect, but recently the data has improved. As a result Riksbank will not slip back into a more dovish stance next week. If this week's data disappoints, a small excursion towards 8.80 in EUR-SEK is possible, but this level is likely to hold ahead of the Riksbank meeting next week.

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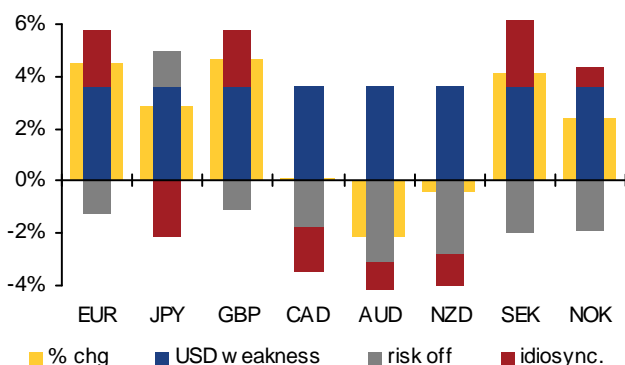
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CHART 4: No idiosyncratic yen strength – on the contrary!

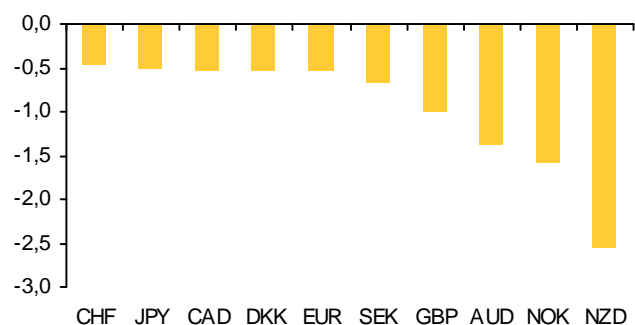
Dissection of USD exchange rate moves since 9th July according to our G10 factor model



Source: Commerzbank Research

CHART 5: USD strength and Kiwi being the worst performer

% gain / loss vs. USD since August 15 2013



Source: Commerzbank Research

FX Metrics

G10 carry trade indices

The portfolio weighting of a common carry trade strategy often simply corresponds to the ranking of the interest rate levels. Moreover the number of investment positions is usually fixed at the outset. However, such a strategy does not effectively exploit the benefits of diversifying across different investments. We therefore suggest a portfolio strategy that optimizes the diversification effect and significantly reduces the downside risk entailed in carry trades using “mean-variance” optimization.

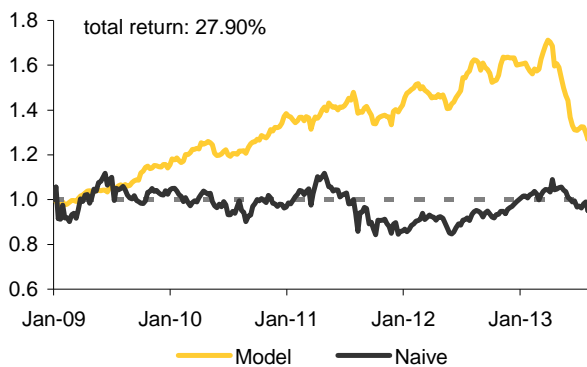
Below we illustrate an example of a mean-variance optimised carry trade portfolio on a selected currency basket with a pre-set risk level. For the optimization the variance has been chosen randomly and can be adjusted as required.

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CHART 6: Historic performance of optimized Carry Trade Portfolio

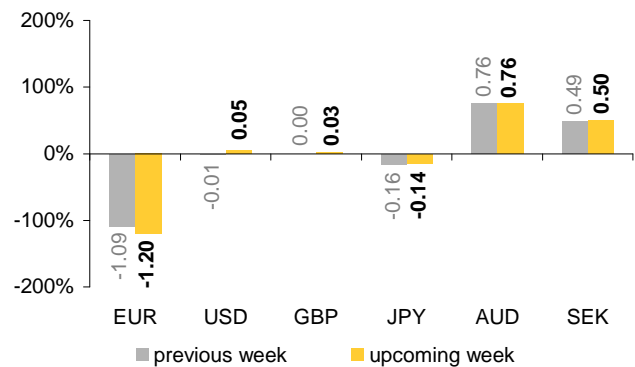
Cumulative return¹ since 6 January 2009, weekly rebalancing, target variance: 6%; Naïve strategy: B&H strategy, 3 high yielders long, 3 low yielders short; Currency basket: EUR (base), USD, GBP, JPY, AUD, SEK, CHF (excluded after Sept 2011)



Source: Commerzbank Research

CHART 7: Portfolio weights for week 27 Aug to 3 Sep

Currency basket: EUR (base), USD, GBP, JPY, AUD, SEK; weights in %



Source: Commerzbank Research

Methodology

Our optimized strategy considers the correlation of the exchange rates in the portfolio weighing decision, i.e. the good old “mean-variance” optimisation according to Harry M. Markowitz. For the carry trade portfolio this means investing in carries in such a manner that an optimum relation between carry and the risk assumed is achieved. Needless to say, the more accurate the estimate of the correlation matrix the larger the advantage of the portfolio optimisation. For our portfolio we therefore use a trend model to forecast the relevant correlations on a weekly basis. In particular, the forecast is based on a linear trend over the weekly correlations of the last month. This trend is then extrapolated to the coming week to yield a forecast. Subsequently, the trend is rolled over on a weekly basis. This trend-based forecast therefore uses more timely input which ultimately increases forecast accuracy.

¹ Returns are based on Tuesdays' London opening

EM Highlights

TRY to remain weak despite CBRT's efforts. Rate decision and GDP release in Brazil. Investors should tread carefully when it comes to initiating long ILS-positions.

TRY: The Turkish lira is under increasing pressure on the back of uncertainty regarding US monetary policy. CBRT governor Erdem Basci today stepped in to try and calm markets. In his view the TRY will surely recover by year end as uncertainty over the Fed's future course will become more clear. However, markets remained unimpressed and even increased the depreciation pressure as Basci noted that there was no need to further hike key rates. Instead he signalled that the CBRT was ready to intervene more aggressively via FX sales on the market. Further such tightening measures will be announced on Sept 2nd. Market skepticism remains high though. Although Basci assured that the CBRT has enough reserves to support the TRY, it is highly uncertain what the effect of the Fed actually starting to taper will be. Due to the high current account deficit, Turkey is particularly vulnerable to a sudden capital reversal. This risk is keeping the depreciation pressure on the TRY on elevated levels.

BRL: The central bank (BCB) stepped up its efforts to mitigate the real's fall. On Thursday the BCB announced that it will hold regular swap auctions (Mondays to Thursdays) and will provide credit lines in USD (Fridays). The programme, which started last Friday, is going to continue at least until year-end. While the real was able to benefit significantly on Friday, the positive effect seems to be already fading, unsurprisingly. Fundamentals are still an issue. Last week's release of the July current account intensified concerns in this respect. While the deficit increased, FDI inflows decreased, raising the question how Brazil is going to finance the deficit in the future. This week's events might weigh on the real. On Wednesday the BCB will decide on its key rates. While the decision itself should deliver no surprise (50bps hike) the accompanying statement will be watched carefully for any hints on further rate hikes since the weak BRL is a risk for inflation. In any case, the central bank's dilemma (high inflation, weak growth) will once again be highlighted by the meeting. On Friday Q2 GDP will be released. After a weak Q1 (0.6% qoq), Q2 will probably only show a slight pick up in growth. Fundamental weakness, uncertainty surrounding Fed-tapering and, additionally, risk-off mood: although the authorities made clear that there is more to come if necessary, a weaker currency seems unavoidable.

ILS: Yesterday the Bank of Israel left rates on hold as expected at 1.5%. Our view was and remains that key rates have bottomed and that they will likely remain at these low levels for an extended period before moving higher. Inflation levels have also bottomed and will likely move with a mild upward bias in the coming months, hence a dovish bias is no longer warranted, at least for domestic concerns. However USD-ILS has corrected from its recent lows (3.55) towards 3.62. This is due to generic EM concerns and although shekel strength is justified by developments in Israel's balance of payments situation, it makes little sense to initiate long ILS positions before Fed tapering begins. The bottom line, at least for the moment, is that investors should tread carefully when it comes to initiating long EM positions, ILS being no exception.

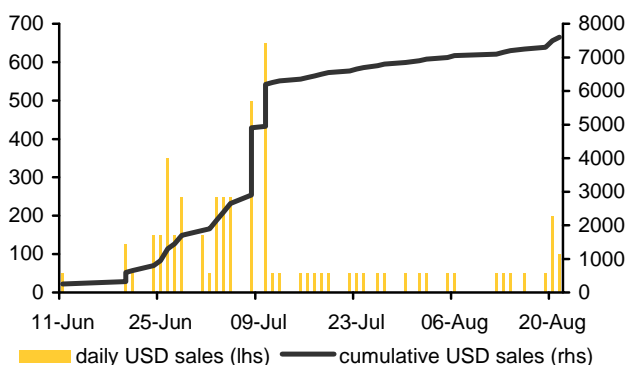
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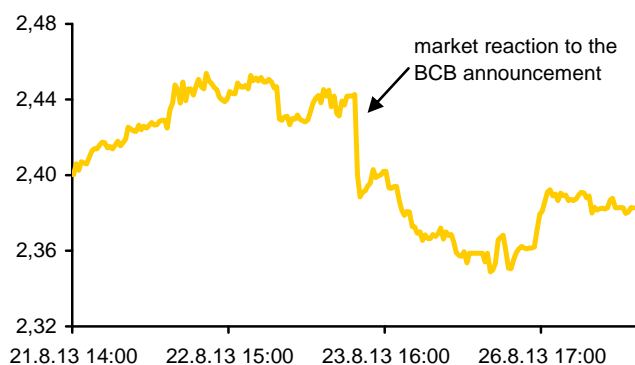
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CHART 8: **Turkish reserves are melting away**
FX sales of CBRT in USD mn



Source: Commerzbank Research

CHART 9: **Positive effect already fading...**
USD-BRL spot rate, 10 minutes data



Source: Commerzbank Research

Tactical trade recommendation

Establish long USD-ZAR positions.

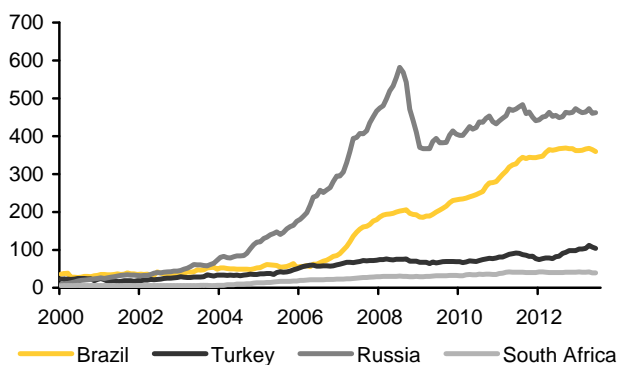
Year to date ZAR has lost the most ground amongst the EMEA complex. The reasons for ZAR weakness are at this stage well known: a high current account deficit, high inflation levels and high unemployment levels which prevent the SARB from hiking rates. This differentiates ZAR from other EM currencies in that other central banks like CBRT can engage in non standard measures to prevent excessive currency weakness, thereby rendering ZAR less attractive on an absolute and relative basis.

The SARB is constrained not just by a lack of options with key interest rates but more to the point, a notable dearth of FX reserves compared to peers mean that there is little SARB can do to attenuate further ZAR weakness. Thus should EM currencies continue to lose ground, then it stands to reason that ZAR should weaken further. Even in the case of a turnaround, ZAR remains beset by idiosyncratic weakness which in our view will limit appreciation potential over the short to medium term. We recommend investors to buy any dip in USD-ZAR with a view to taking profit towards 10.85. We maintain a tight stop below 10.20.

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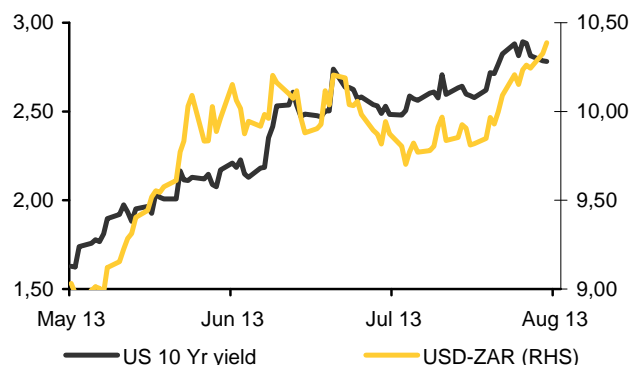
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CHART 10: South Africa FX reserves relatively small
FX reserves in USD billion



Sources: Commerzbank Research, Bloomberg LP, IMF

CHART 11: USD-ZAR moving in line with US yields
USD-ZAR spot, US 10 Yr yield in %



Sources: Commerzbank Research, Bloomberg LP

TAB. 1: Discretionary Option Trade Recommendations (base currency EUR)

| Trade date | Strategy | Expiry | Size | Premium | Value | P&L | Open / Closed |
|------------|--|------------|---------|---------|--------|--------|---------------|
| 04.02.2013 | Short EURp-CHFc 1.2050 | 04.12.2013 | 1m | +1.10% | -0.21% | 0.89% | Open |
| 12.03.2013 | Sell CAD-MXN risk reversal 13.00 / 11.90 | 12.09.2013 | 2m x 1m | 0.28% | 0.05% | -0.23% | Open |
| 28.05.2013 | Buy USD-CHF risk reversal 0.94 / 1.00 | 28.08.2013 | 1m x 1m | 0.23% | -1.50% | -1.73% | Open |
| 08.07.2013 | Sell GBP-USD risk reversal 1.51 / 1.46 | 08.10.2013 | 1m x 1m | 0.01% | -3.60% | -3.61% | Open |
| 20.08.2013 | Buy AUDp-JPYc 87.00 | 19.09.2013 | 1m | 0.42% | 0.69% | 0.27% | Open |

Sources: Bloomberg L.P., Commerzbank Research

Technical Analysis

The US Dollar Index remains bid while trading above the 80.50 June low

Over the past couple of weeks the US Dollar Index dropped back towards the June low at 80.50 but managed to stabilise above it.

As long as it holds, our medium term bullish forecast will remain valid.

Upside targets for the months ahead are the 84.10/75 2012 as well as May and July 2013 highs.

The 78.6% Fibonacci retracement of the 2010-11 decline at 85.28 and the 2005-13 resistance line at 85.97 also remain in focus.

Should key support at 80.50 be fallen through, however, the 200 week moving average at 79.70 and the September 2012 to January 2013 lows at 78.92/60 could be retested before the long term uptrend resumes.

We expect the 80.50 support area to hold, though, and for renewed upside momentum to be seen in the weeks to come.

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CHART 12: US Dollar Index Weekly Chart

Remains bid while above the 80.50 June low; this is key for the medium term trend



Source: CQG, Commerzbank Research

Event Calendar

| Date | Time | Region | Release | Unit | Period | Survey | Prior | |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--------|--------|-------|------|
| 27 August | 14:00 | USA | Case-Shiller house price index | yoy | JUN | 12,1 | 12,2 | |
| | 15:00 | USA | Consumer confidence CB | | AUG | 79,0 | 80,3 | |
| 28 August | 07:00 | GER | GfK Consumer Confidence | | SEP | 7,1 | 7,0 | |
| | 07:00 | GER | Import Prices | mom | JUL | 0,3 | -0,8 | |
| | | | | yoy | JUL | -2,5 | -2,2 | |
| | 09:00 | EUR | M3 money supply 3 month av. | yoy | JUL | 2,4 | 2,8 | |
| | 12:00 | USA | MBA Mortgage Applications | % | AUG 23 | - | -4,60 | |
| | 13:00 | RUB | CPI weekly year to date | % | AUG 26 | - | 4,5 | |
| | 15:00 | USA | Pending home sales | mom | JUL | 0,0 | -0,4 | |
| 29 August | 00:50 | JPY | Retail trade | mom | JUL | -1,0 | -0,2 | |
| | | | | yoy | JUL | 0,1 | 1,6 | |
| | 08:00 | TRY | Trade balance | USD bn | JUL | -8,70 | -8,57 | |
| | | SEK | Retail sales | mom | JUL | 0,1 | 0,6 | |
| | | | | yoy | JUL | 3,3 | 3,6 | |
| | 12:00 | RUB | FX and gold reserves | USD bn | AUG 23 | - | 507,7 | |
| | 13:00 | GER | Consumer prices | mom | AUG P | 0,1 | 0,5 | |
| | | | | yoy | AUG P | 1,7 | 1,9 | |
| | 13:30 | USA | Initial jobless claims | K | AUG 24 | 331 | 336 | |
| | 13:30 | USA | GDP annualized | qoq | 2Q S | 2,2 | 1,7 | |
| | 30 August | 00:05 | GBP | GfK Consumer Confidence ex fresh food and energy | mom | AUG | -14 | -16 |
| | | | | | mom | AUG | -0,3 | -0,4 |
| | | 00:30 | JPY | CPI | yoy | AUG | 0,5 | 0,4 |
| | | | ex fresh food | yoy | AUG | 0,4 | 0,3 | |
| 00:30 | | JPY | Unemployment rate | % | JUL | 3,9 | 3,9 | |
| 00:50 | | JPY | Industrial production | mom | JUL P | 3,6 | -3,1 | |
| | | | | yoy | JUL P | 1,8 | -4,6 | |
| 07:00 | | GBP | Nationwide House Price Index | mom | AUG | 0,6 | 0,8 | |
| | | | | yoy | AUG | 3,3 | 3,9 | |
| 07:00 | | GER | Retail sales | mom | JUL | 0,6 | -0,8 | |
| | | | | yoy | JUL | 1,8 | -2,8 | |
| | | CHF | KOF leading indicator | | AUG | 1,32 | 1,23 | |
| 08:00 | | HUF | Producer price index | mom | JUL | - | 0,3 | |
| | | | | yoy | JUL | 1,7 | 0,6 | |
| 09:00 | | PLN | GDP | yoy | 2Q F | - | 0,8 | |
| 09:30 | | GBP | Mortgage approval | K | JUL | 59 | 58 | |
| 10:00 | | EUR | Consumer confidence | | AUG F | -16,5 | -15,6 | |
| | | Industrial confidence | | AUG | -9,6 | -10,6 | | |
| | | Business confidence | | AUG | 93,8 | 92,5 | | |
| 10:00 | EUR | Consumer price index | yoy | AUG | 1,4 | 1,6 | | |
| | | core rate | yoy | AUG A | 1,1 | 1,1 | | |
| 13:00 | ZAR | Trade balance | ZAR bn | JUL | -9,0 | -7,7 | | |
| 13:30 | USA | Personal income | mom | JUL | 0,2 | 0,3 | | |
| | | Personal spending | mom | JUL | 0,3 | 0,5 | | |
| | | PCE-deflator | yoy | JUL | 1,4 | 1,3 | | |
| | | PCE core rate | mom | JUL | 0,2 | 0,2 | | |
| | | | yoy | JUL | 1,3 | 1,2 | | |
| 13:30 | CAD | GDP | mom | JUN | -0,4 | 0,2 | | |
| 14:45 | USA | Chicago PMI | | AUG | 53,0 | 52,3 | | |
| 14:55 | USA | Michigan consumer confidence | | AUG F | 80,5 | 80,0 | | |
| 02 September | 07:30 | SEK | Swedbank PMI Survey | | AUG | - | 51,3 | |
| | 08:00 | NOK | Puchasing Manager Index | | AUG | - | 47,5 | |
| | 08:00 | RON | Retail sales | mom | JUL | - | 0,0 | |
| | | | | yoy | JUL | - | -2,3 | |
| | 08:30 | CHF | SVME- PMI | | AUG | - | 57,4 | |
| | 08:55 | GER | PMI (Markit) | | AUG F | - | 52,0 | |
| | 09:00 | EUR | PMI (Markit) | | AUG F | 50,7 | 51,3 | |
| | 09:30 | GBP | PMI (Markit) | | AUG | - | 54,6 | |
| | 10:00 | ZAR | Investec PMI | | AUG | - | 52,2 | |

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