

23 December 2016

Global

Tracking Global News

1. **US Personal Consumption Slows in November, As Income Barely Changed; GDP Revised Higher for 3Q 2016, Durable Goods Fell and Leading Indicator Stalls in November**
2. **Japan Approved A Record Budget For 2017**
3. **Philippines Left Its Key Rates Unchanged in December**

US Personal Consumption Slows in November, As Income Barely Changed.

US personal consumption expenditure (PCE) slowed into a growth of 0.2% MoM in November, from +0.4% in October and +0.7% in September. The reading came in lower than the median estimate of +0.3%, reflecting the lack of change in income in November. Indeed, personal income stagnated in November, following a +0.5% expansion in October (+0.4% in September). Similarly, disposable income barely moved in November, after growing +0.5% in the previous month. After adjusting for inflation, which generates the figures used to calculate gross domestic product, purchases remained stable at 0.1% MoM in November, unchanged from the previous month. Despite consumer spending stagnating during the month, the savings rate eased lower to 5.5% of disposable income in November, from 5.7% in October, and compared with 5.6% in September.

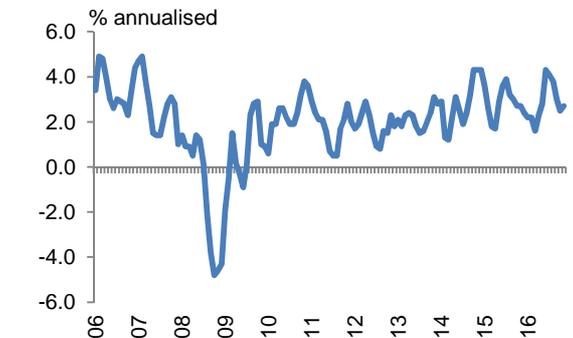
Meanwhile, the headline PCE price, the inflation measure that is preferred by Fed policy makers, slowed to 0.1% in November, after gaining +0.3% in October. YoY, the headline PCE price index remained stable at 1.2% during the month, unchanged from October. On the same note, the core PCE price index, which excludes food & energy prices, barely moved in November, following an expansion of +0.1% in the previous month. YoY, the core PCE price index, was left unchanged at 1.5% in November, matching the pace in the previous month. As a whole, the November personal income and spending brought down the prospects for a sharper acceleration in consumer activity through year-end. While the income stall was likely just a short-term development, it serves as a broader reminder that consumers will dominate the 2017 economic growth landscape, and as a result, the pace of overall growth will be directly linked to household income prospects. Wage gains should pick up as labour scarcity becomes more evident. Nonetheless, household income developments will be a major focal point of the medium term economic landscape. (Source: Bloomberg)

Table 1: Major Countries Economic Growth

Annualised	2014	2015	2Q15	3Q15	4Q15	1Q16	2Q16	3Q16
US	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.0	0.9	0.8	1.4	3.5
Eurozone	0.9	1.5	1.5	1.3	2	2	1.2	1.4
UK	2.9	2.2	2.0	1.2	2.7	1.7	2.7	2.0
Japan	-0.1	0.5	-0.5	0.8	-1.8	2.8	1.8	1.3
China (% YoY)	7.3	6.9	7.0	6.9	6.8	6.7	6.7	6.7
Russia (% YoY)	0.7	-3.7	-4.5	-3.7	-3.8	-1.2	-0.6	-0.4
Brazil (% YoY)	0.1	-3.8	-3.0	-4.5	-5.8	-5.4	-3.6	-2.9

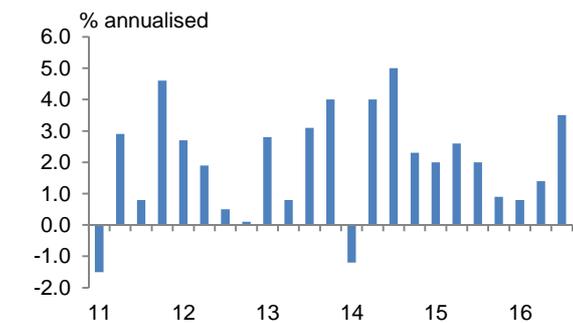
Source: Bloomberg

Figure 1 : US PCE 3-Month Annualised



Source: Bloomberg

Figure 2 : US GDP Annualised



Source: Bloomberg

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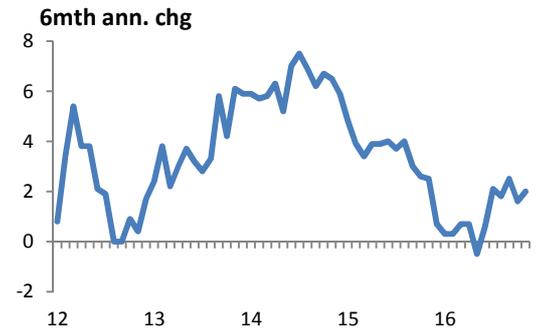
US GDP Revised Higher for 3Q 2016, On Stronger Personal Spending. The third reading of US real GDP came higher at an annualised pace of 3.5% in 3Q 2016, from +3.2% in the second reading and compared with +2.9% in 2Q. The upward revision was on the back of a pickup in personal consumption and gross private investment. As it stands, personal consumption gained pace to an annualised growth of 3.0% in 3Q, from +2.8% in the previous reading, but slower compared to +4.3% in 2Q, on account of higher spending of goods and services. Similarly, gross private investment was revised higher to 3.0% annualised during the quarter, from 2.1% in the second reading and compared to a decline of -7.9% in 2Q. Private fixed investment, which includes residential and business spending, bounced back into a growth in the 3Q, reflecting a narrower margin of decline in residential fixed investment. A pick-up in non-residential fixed investment during the quarter also helped. At the same time, government spending picked up during the quarter to an annualised growth of 0.8% pace in 3Q, from +0.2% in the previous reading and compared to -1.7% in 2Q, mainly on account of a slower rate of decline in state and local spending. These were, however, partly offset by the slowdown in exports which inched lower in the third reading to an annualised growth of 10.0% in the 3Q, from +10.1% in the prior reading, and compared to +1.8% in 2Q. On the other hand, imports rose marginally to annualised growth of 2.2% in 3Q, from 2.1% in the second reading and compared to +0.2% in 2Q. As a result, the trade deficit widened to USD522.2bn, compared to USD521.0bn in the previous reading, but lower compared to USD558.5 in 2Q.

The revisions to 3Q GDP show the economy on a stronger pace of expansion, albeit one that is not entirely sustainable. A surge in exports which added 116 bps to growth in the quarter was largely due to a temporary surge in agricultural exports. Absent this, the pace of the current quarter is to reset lower toward 2-2.5%. Nevertheless, this pace is sufficient to further drive down labour slack, which will intensify wage pressures, and thereby enable consumer spending to continue driving growth in 2017. (Source: Bloomberg)

US Durable Goods Fell Into A Decline in November. US new orders for durable goods slipped into a decline of 4.6% MoM in November, following a gain of +4.8% in October (+0.3% in September), on account of a decline in capital goods during the month. The reading came slightly higher than an estimated of -4.8%, indicating corporate investment is having trouble gaining traction. As it stands, the decline in new orders were on account of a drop in transportation orders in November, reversing from a gain in the previous month. Likewise, orders for commercial aircraft slipped into a contraction, following an expansion in October, while orders for electrical equipment slowed during the month. These were, however, partly mitigated by the rebound in orders of vehicles & parts and machinery, while orders for computers & electronics picked up during the month. Excluding transportation, new orders for durable goods slowed to 0.5% MoM in November, from +0.9% in the previous month. In contrast, new orders for non-defence capital goods excluding aircraft, a measure commonly used as an indicator of future equipment and software investment, advanced by 0.9% MoM in November, from +0.2% in the preceding month. The November report shows few encouraging signs for an acceleration in capital spending in the second half of the year. Most of the indicators related to the factory sector are pointing to a softer environment, and possibly a significantly weaker outlook. Combined with the economically-compromising fundamentals of a higher interest-rate environment and a stronger US dollar, it is not clear how the struggling manufacturing sector manages to improve in 2017. (Source: Bloomberg)

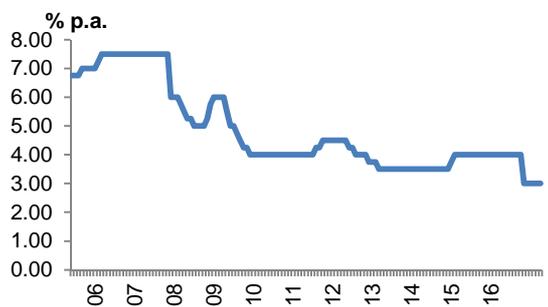
US Leading Indicator Stalls in November. The US Conference Board's leading indicator, which provides an early signal on the direction of the economy over the next three to six months, stagnated in November, following a 0.1% gain in October. Eight out of the 10 components of the composite measure registered expansions in their contributions. As it stands, the stall in November was on the back of negative contributions in average workweek and building permits, following positive contributions in October. Meanwhile, consumer goods orders posted a smaller contribution in November. These were mitigated by higher contributions from interest rate spread and orders of non-defence capital goods excluding aircraft during the month. Meanwhile, jobless claims, average consumer expectations and leading credit index recorded positive contributions in November, reversing from net drags in the previous month, while ISM new orders posted a smaller drag during the month. On a six-month annualised basis, the

Figure 3 : US Leading Indicators



Source: Bloomberg

Figure 4 : Philippines' Key Policy Rate



Source: Bloomberg

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leading index gained pace to 2.0% in November, from +1.6% in October. As a whole, the leading indicators suggest the economy is growing at a moderate pace and is likely to continue expanding into early 2017. (Source: Bloomberg)

Japan Approved A Record Budget For 2017. Japan's Cabinet approved a record JPY97.5trn (USD830bn) spending budget for fiscal year 2017 starting on 1 April that counts on low interest rates and a weak yen to limit borrowing, underscoring the challenge Tokyo faces in curbing the industrial world's heaviest debt burden. The budget marks an increase of JPY733bn from this year's initial plan due to a rising social security bill to fund the cost of services for a fast-ageing society. Excluding debt-servicing costs, a record-high JPY73.9trn is earmarked for policy spending in the general account. Among major outlays, social security costs — including pensions and medical expenses — will increase 1.6% to JPY32.5trn. Defense spending comes to a record-high of JPY5.1trn, up 1.4%, to better respond to security threats, mainly from China's maritime assertiveness and North Korea's ballistic missile development. A total of JPY6.0trn is allocated for public works projects and other purposes, such as strengthening the defense of the Senkaku Islands, claimed by China, in the East China Sea, and boosting tourism in Japan to achieve a goal of attracting 40 million foreign visitors in 2020. Tax revenue is expected to increase 0.2% to JPY57.7trn from the current year's initial budget in anticipation of the yen's weakening that would boost corporate earnings. It enables Japan to cut its dependence on debt, albeit slightly, to 35.3% from 35.6% in the fiscal 2016 initial budget. New bond issuance is reduced by JPY62.2bn to JPY34.4trn in fiscal 2017, while total issuance comes to JPY154.0trn, with roughly two-thirds of that amount for refinancing bonds. The budgeted plan highlights a struggle Prime Minister Shinzo Abe faces in curbing spending, which is a key to his ambitious aim of achieving a primary budget surplus - excluding debt servicing and new bond sales - by the fiscal 2020. Finance Minister Taro Aso stressed that Abe will stick with reflationary policies with monetary easing and "flexible" fiscal spending. (Source: JapanTimes, Reuters)

Philippines Left Its Key Rates Unchanged in December. Bangko Sentral Ng Pilipinas (BSP) maintained the overnight reverse repurchase (RRP) and lending rates stable at 3.0% and 3.5% respectively on 22 Dec 2016, as the current level of interest rates remains supportive of economic growth while inflation continues to be benign. Similarly, the special deposit account (SDA) facility and the reserve requirement were held steady at 2.50% and 20% respectively. BSP is of the view that the central bank's latest baseline forecasts indicate that average inflation is likely to settle below the target range of 2%-4% for 2016 and rise toward the mid-point of the target range in 2017 and 2018. Domestically, domestic demand conditions are expected to be firm, supported by solid private household consumption, higher government expenditure, and ample credit and domestic liquidity.

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