

ECONOMIC SCENARIO

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UNITED STATES

The U.S. economy continued to grow in Q4, although it slowed slightly compared to Q3. However, the main drivers of growth, namely household consumption and private inventories, are fragile, suggesting that the economy should continue to slow. Indeed, growth decelerated in Q1 2023. This slowdown remains progressive however as evidenced by the slow puncture of the labour market, with job creation remaining high, the unemployment rate low and wage growth buoyant. Inflation seems to have peaked in the middle of 2022, but core disinflation remains gradual in such a way that headline inflation should stay significantly above the target of 2% by the end of 2023. Nevertheless, the Federal Reserve may have completed its policy rate hike cycle given the concomitant tightening of credit access conditions. The ongoing monetary tightening is expected to drive the US economy into recession in the second half of 2023 and limit the expected recovery in 2024.

CHINA

Economic growth, which was sluggish and unbalanced in 2022, will strengthen in 2023. The end of the zero Covid policy has led to a rebound in private demand and activity in the services sector since late January, and household consumption will continue to benefit from large catch-up effects in the short term. However, while export and industrial production prospects are darkened by the weakening in global demand, activity driven by the domestic market remains constrained by important drags. In fact, the recovery in the labour market remains uncertain, the improvement in the property and construction sectors is likely to be limited, and the worrying financial situation of local governments should constrain public investment. Fiscal and monetary support is expected to be prudent. Consumer price inflation, which averaged 2% in 2022, should accelerate only mildly in 2023.

EUROZONE

Economic growth in the eurozone was zero in the fourth quarter of 2022, but better than expected for 2022 as a whole, at 3.5%. It continued to surprise favorably in the early months of 2023 judging by the improvement in survey data (business confidence and, to a lesser extent, consumer confidence). However, the combination of the inflationary shock, the energy crisis and forced monetary tightening and the build-up of their negative effects will weaken activity in 2023. Real GDP growth should be weakly positive in 2023 and 2024, at 0.8% and 0.5% respectively. Although it is expected to decline throughout 2023, inflation would remain elevated and well above the 2% target at the end of this year and still a bit above at the end of 2024, forcing monetary policy to remain in restrictive territory.

FRANCE

Real GDP growth has decreased in H2 2022 (0.2% q/q in Q3 and 0.1% in Q4, after +0.5% in Q2). Corporate investment and inventory rebuilding have remained the main growth drivers, whereas household demand has played on the downside: household consumption has decreased by 1.2% q/q in Q4 and their investment by 0.9%. As inflation is still high (and has reached a new peak of 7.3% y/y in February 2023 according to the harmonized measure) and because of rising interest rates, household demand should remain subdued in 2023, weighing on our GDP growth forecast (0.5% in 2023, compared to 2.6% in 2022).

RATES AND EXCHANGE RATES

In the US, following a 25 basis point increase in the Fed Funds rate in May, the Federal Reserve is likely to stop raising interest rates. Inflation remains at an elevated level but steep tightening in lending standards should tilt the balance in favour of the end of the tightening cycle. Given the slow disinflation process, no rate cut may be expected until the beginning of 2024, despite the US economy entering recession in the second semester of 2023. The peak in long-term yields is likely to have been reached too. Bond yields should subsequently move lower as the inflation outlook improves and the market starts anticipating monetary policy easing in 2024.

Though, for the Fed, the hike in May is expected to be the last one, this should not be the case for the ECB. We expect the ECB to continue to tighten its monetary policy, by raising the deposit rate to 3.75% in Q3. As part of its monetary tightening tools, it also announced a complete halt, starting in July 2023, of its reinvestments under the APP. European long-term rates may also have peaked and should move lower, driven by both a gradual decline in inflation in the eurozone and lower US yields.

The Bank of Japan has increased the upper end of its target range for the 10-year JGB yield to 0.5% and further adjustments to the yield curve control policy cannot be excluded. Nevertheless, we do not expect the BoJ to proceed with a rate hike.

We expect the dollar to weaken somewhat versus the euro. The dollar's valuation is expensive, positioning in the market is very long and the long-term interest rate differential should narrow. We expect the yen to remain around current levels in the near term before strengthening versus the dollar considering that the federal funds rate should have reached its terminal rate.

GDP GROWTH AND INFLATION

%	GDP Growth**				Inflation*			
	2021	2022	2023 e	2024 e	2021	2022	2023 e	2024 e
United-States	5.9	2.1	1.4	-0.1	4.7	8.0	4.4	2.6
Japan	2.2	1.0	1.1	0.8	-0.2	2.5	3.3	1.7
United-Kingdom	7.6	4.1	0.4	0.7	2.6	9.1	6.6	2.0
Euro Area	5.3	3.5	0.6	0.5	2.6	8.4	5.4	2.6
Germany	2.6	1.9	0.0	0.5	3.2	8.7	5.8	2.6
France	6.8	2.6	0.5	0.6	2.1	5.9	6.1	3.0
Italy	7.0	3.8	0.9	0.6	1.9	8.7	6.1	2.2
Spain	5.5	5.5	1.8	0.8	3.0	8.3	3.2	2.2
China	8.4	3.0	5.6	5.3	0.9	2.0	2.7	2.5
India***	8.7	7.0	5.7	6.0	5.5	6.7	5.4	4.5
Brazil	5.0	2.9	1.5	0.5	8.3	9.3	5.5	5.5

* LAST UPDATE 28 APRIL 2023: INFLATION JAPAN; 20 APRIL 2023: INFLATION EUROZONE, GERMANY, FRANCE, ITALY, SPAIN AND UK; 31 MARCH 2023: US GDP AND INFLATION

** LAST UPDATE 17 MAY 2023: GDP UK AND JAPAN; 21 APRIL 2023: GDP EUROZONE, GERMANY, FRANCE, ITALY AND SPAIN

*** FISCAL YEAR FROM 1ST APRIL OF YEAR N TO MARCH 31ST OF YEAR N+1

SOURCE: BNP PARIBAS (E: ESTIMATES & FORECASTS)

INTEREST AND EXCHANGE RATES

Interest rates, %

End of period		Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
US	Fed Funds (upper limit)*	5.25	5.25	5.25	3.50
	T-Note 10y **	3.75	3.50	3.40	3.25
Eurozone	deposit rate*	3.50	3.75	3.75	2.75
	Bund 10y **	2.60	2.45	2.20	2.00
	OAT 10y	3.15	3.00	2.72	2.50
	BTP 10y	4.60	4.70	4.45	3.80
	BONO 10y	3.60	3.55	3.30	2.90
UK	Base rate*	4.75	4.75	4.75	3.50
	Gilts 10y **	3.75	3.50	3.35	2.80
Japan	BoJ Rate	-0.10	-0.10	-0.10	0.10
	JGB 10y**	0.45	0.60	0.65	0.80

Exchange Rates

End of period		Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
USD	EUR / USD	1.10	1.12	1.14	1.18
	USD / JPY	133	130	127	121
	GBP / USD	1.24	1.26	1.28	1.33
EUR	EUR / GBP	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89
	EUR / JPY	146	146	145	143

Brent

End of period		Q2 2023	Q3 2023	Q4 2023	Q4 2024
Brent	USD/bbl	85	90	90	95

* DEPOSIT RATE: LAST UPDATE AT 27 APRIL 2023, FED FUNDS : 31 MARCH 2023, BOE: 11 MAY 2023

** BUND 10Y: LAST UPDATE AT 3 MAY, GILTS 10Y: 20 APRIL 2023, JGB 10Y: 28 MARCH, US 10Y: 12 APRIL

SOURCES: BNP PARIBAS (MARKET ECONOMICS, INTEREST RATE STRATEGY, FX STRATEGY, COMMODITIES DESK STRATEGY)



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