

September FOMC Preview and Market Implications

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We want that Tapering: Its September then, then November, December, What?

Okay... this subtitle will take a little bit of explaining but for those familiar with that catchy tune by Riton & Nightcrawlers feat. Mufasa & Hypeman, you will know what I mean. A modification and an ode to tapering of the intro of that song would go like: You know we finally here, right? Where are we? It's taper time... if we do not get it in September then its either in November or December, what?

This is what tapering has come down to, guessing which month they finally go ahead with the most televised Fed action in history. If the Fed truly wants to separate tapering from tightening they need to just get on with it. However something tells me that given recent price action and uneven data they will still lean on the dovish side, i.e. give us enough guidance without delivering the full taper news.

This meeting is also critical given that we will get the 2024 dots and an update for all the prior years as well, with 2022 being a close call of coming in at 1 hike. The statement will also need a re-writing to suggest that "substantial further progress" has been made on the labor markets (so expect that phrase to drop). It will also be interesting to see how far they can stretch the transitory inflation line.

Bottom-line: Thus far the Fed has been able to avoid a 2013 taper tantrum repeat by stretching out the taper discussion and eventual implementation of their tapering plans. However signs of excess liquidity are everywhere (from the swollen RRP usage to tight spreads and high valuations in risk assets) so the jury is still out for what takes place once tapering is in motion. That however is not the focus of this meeting. The focus at this meeting is the 2024 dots, statement language adjustments (is inflation still transitory and how about the slowing of the economy lately, also transitory), taper and Powell's Presser (and expect questions on China and the debt ceiling)...

FOMC MARKET SCENARIOS

The last Fed meeting had a slightly hawkish tilt in the statement (characterizing the economy is in a strengthening period) and chair Powell was more upbeat during his press conference too and even downplayed the impact of future CV19 waves on the economy. Yet rates barely moved on the day at the July meeting with 5s30s experiencing a minor flattening twist. At this juncture I feel there is more at risk and depending on what tone is struck, markets may move more, closer to what we saw in June meeting, I lean hawkish.

- Dovish scenario (15% chance):* Fed basically does not make any changes to rates, the 2024 dot has just 1 hike, and no specifics given on taper. In such a scenario vols will come off, belly rates rally and credit spreads and risk assets perform into quarter-end.
- Neutral scenario (55% chance):* After having adjusted RRP rates and setting up the standing repo facility (SRF), the Fed is ready to taper but does not provide the breakdowns or starting date, instead states that before year-end the Fed is preparing to reduce the pace of QE purchases. They do not collectively raise the 2022 dot dampening fears of a faster hiking campaign lies ahead.
- Hawkish scenario (20% chance):* The 2022 submission end up tipping the scales toward 1 median hike projected that year and the 2024 dots have 2 or more hikes built into that terminal rate as well. 5s would come under pressure as the curve flattens.
- Uber-hawkish scenario (10%):* Take the hawkish scenario and add in the actual launch of the tapering, and starts up in October.

Comparing the actual last three FOMC meeting market moves and average cross-market changes for FOMC events (based on five years of historical data)																
	Bills (bp)				Coupons (bp)				Curves (bp)		TIPS (bp)	Vol (bpv)	FX (%)		Risk Market	
	1m	3m	6m	1y	2yr	5yr	10yr	30yr	2s10s	5s30s	10yr Real	1y10y vol	Euro	Yen	SPX	IG Spreads
7/28/2021	(0.3)	0.1	0.1	0.1	(0.2)	1.2	(0.8)	(1.3)	(0.7)	(2.6)	(4.7)	(1.3)	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	(1.1)
6/16/2021	1.3	1.2	0.7	1.4	4.2	11.5	8.3	2.1	4.1	(9.4)	15.1	0.4	-1.1%	0.6%	-0.5%	(1.6)
4/28/2021	2.8	0.6	(0.3)	(0.3)	(1.6)	(3.1)	(1.2)	(0.5)	0.3	2.5	(3.0)	(0.1)	0.3%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0
Avg Chg day	(2.1)	(1.7)	(1.6)	(0.9)	(1.8)	(2.5)	(2.7)	(2.8)	(0.9)	(0.3)	(1.8)	(0.7)	0.1%	-0.2%	-0.4%	0.5
Avg 1-day post	(1.5)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.6)	0.1	1.0	1.2	1.0	(0.0)	1.6	0.0	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5	
Avg 5-day post	(0.7)	(1.1)	(1.4)	(3.6)	(2.9)	(2.4)	(1.8)	(1.6)	1.1	0.8	(0.6)	0.6	-0.2%	-0.1%	-0.6%	3.7

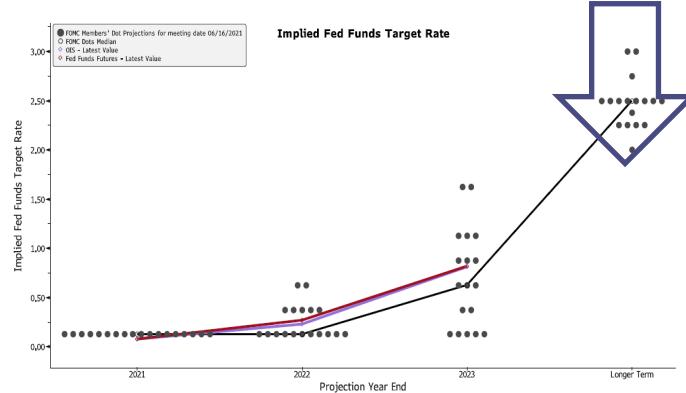
Source: Bloomberg and MUFG U.S. Macro Strategy

FED SEP VIEWS: ALL ABOUT THE DOTS & HOW THEY MARK-TO-MARKET WHAT FEELS LIKE PERSISTENT INFLATION

The Dots: Although there has been much consternation over the Fed's tapering plans all year long, if one goes back and looks at the largest contributor of rate moves at the recent Fed meetings it was actually the lifting of the '23 dots (to suggest 2 hikes) that were updated at the June meeting that led to major rate market moves, especially in the belly. At the September meeting we will get updates for all the future terminal rate (median dots) forecast as well as the introduction of the 2024 rate expectations. I do not think there is major changes done to the 2023 dots so I am focusing on the 2022 and the new 2024 dots. Before I go there, don't you find it interesting that the long-run dots cloud looks like an upside down arrow, maybe a sign of what is yet to come? I digress.

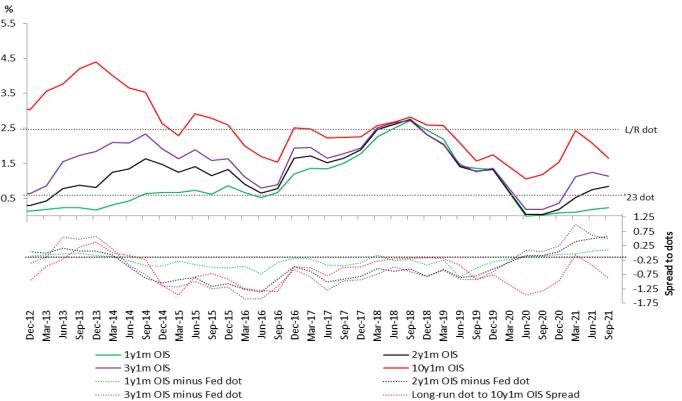
It's a close call on the 2022 dots, but as our fx strategists suggest it would only take 3 FOMC members to raise their dots for the median dot to go to one hike in 2022. Given the clustering of forecasts in 2023, its possible that a similar grouping is formed for 2024 and that would put the 2024 dot closer to 1.125%, suggesting two more hikes then. This would be suggestive of a proper rate hiking campaign of 2 hikes per year for two years running. If the broader FOMC committee wants to deliver a dovish taper I think they would only project 1 hike in 2024 and again no hikes in 2022 just yet as they can always raise the dot estimates next year.

The dots are back in focus: watch the 2022 & 2024 moves



Source: Bloomberg DOTS, MUFG US Macro Strategy

Forwards 1M terminal rates and their spread to the dots

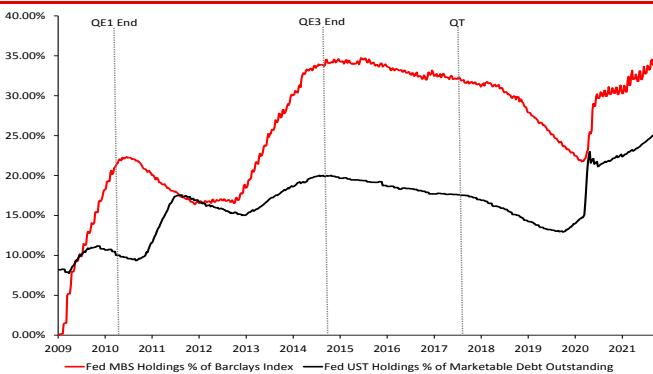


Source: Bloomberg, MUFG US Macro Strategy

FED BALANCE-SHEET POLICY OUTLOOK: TAPERING IS IN THE AIR, MAYBE JUST GUIDANCE OR THEY FINALLY DO IT!

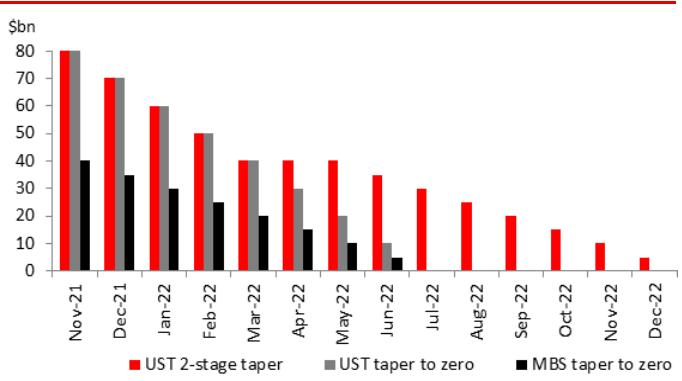
Taper time: This will likely go down as the most well televised change in Fed policy in history. So kudos for the Fed in their attempt at making tapering a non-event. That said its always easier to talk about taking action versus delivering on it. I still am of the view that all this marginal excess liquidity has boosted risk assets and we will only know the counterfactual once they get at least half way through the tapering. Also as I have said before, each meeting now is live until we get the taper, so its always possible that the FOMC gives us enough information at the September meeting that it ends up being the tapering announcement. Alternatively, which is my base case, they give guidance but buy optionality to deliver the final plans at either the November (my base case given the OMOs calendar) or December meeting or in their parlance "sometime before year-end" starting in November with \$15 bn proportional monthly decline would have them wrap up taper by summer 2022. However if there was a material slowing of the economy or some other exogenous event, I am of the view they could let MBS taper continue (given they own so much of that market) and keep buying USTs at a smaller scale. This 2-stage tapering of pausing/restarting would give them more flexibility.

Fed Ownership of UST vs MBS (% of overall marketplace)



Source: Bloomberg, MUFG US Macro Strategy

Fed Tapering: Start in November, keep flexibility to pause



Source: Bloomberg, MUFG US Macro Strategy

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Nordic Alert



Fed signals tapering decision in November – Norges Bank expected to hike rates today

Global key stories

Yesterday's FOMC meeting was slightly more hawkish than generally expected with the Fed now signalling a tapering decision at its 2-3 November meeting. Fed "dots" became more hawkish with half of the committee now seeing a first rate hike already next year and the median forecast suggesting that rates will move back to the pre-pandemic levels of 1.75-2.00% by end-2024 (read more in our Fed review here). The implied probability for a 25bps rate hike by end-2022 priced by fed funds futures jumped from 75% to 95%, the dollar gained slightly, and the 10y Treasury yield returned to pre-FOMC levels after an initial spike higher. Interestingly, while the yield curve flattened, the market pricing for short rates for the coming 3-5 years did not increase, meaning that the OIS market is pricing a faster pace of hikes in the beginning but no more hikes than before over a longer term. We have been arguing in SEB FI & FX Strategy reports that long term rate hike expectations (terminal rate) are likely to rise meaningfully only when the growth anxiety fades and the market sentiment turns better. With weaker macro data and China risk as headwinds, we think this will take some time and continue to target the 10y Treasury yield at 1.50% at the end of this year. US stock markets advanced around 1% after four days of declines in major indices, and the US index futures are pointing cautiously higher. Most Asian markets are edging higher this morning, aided by the PBoC's liquidity injection and hopes that a disorderly collapse of Evergrande Group can be avoided. The company said that it has resolved a domestic bond coupon payment due today and the imminent focus is now on a USD 83.5 million coupon on a dollar bond also due today. According to media reports, Chinese authorities are preparing for a restructuring where the state may take over Evergrande and divide the company into three parts and merge them with state-owned companies. According to Bloomberg, Evergrande Group has USD 669 million of interest due in dollar bonds through the end of this year and USD 7.4bn in maturing dollar bonds in 2022. Today's macro focus will be on PMI data for September and BOE's rate decision.

BOE moving towards the exit. The MPC is split but the balance is shifting towards a start of a normalization process. BOE's new Chief Economist Pill is known to be critical on a too extensive QE policy and Governor Bailey has said that economic conditions to warrant a rate hike were met already in August, despite a unanimous vote to keep rates unchanged. We believe that the MPC will decide to end asset purchases and pave the way for a small rate hike in 2022. We expect a moderation of further sterling appreciation, aiming EUR/GBP at 0.84 and 0.81 in end-2021 and 2022, respectively.

PMI-day. In the euro area, composite PMI took a small step lower in August as services joined the slight decline in manufacturing but levels are still strong though for most components. For manufacturing, the major four euro area economies' production is still below, or close to pre-pandemic levels. For services, the outlook is mixed. The summer has been a clear improvement compared to last year, but things are still not back to normal and the Delta wave remains a headwind. In the US, sentiment indicators signal that US manufacturing has lost some momentum recently but remain in clear expansionary territory with strong demand but continued supply disturbances. Price indexes have remained elevated. Services PMI declined already in July and is more at risk from the spread of the Delta variant. However, retail sales data for August suggest consumers remain resilient. PMI services prices peaked in May but have remained high.

Nordic key stories

Norges Bank: Rate hike and slightly higher rate path. Norges Bank is widely expected to hike the policy rate today by 25bps to 0.25% and strong economic developments suggest that also the rate path will be revised somewhat higher. However, while lower unemployment and rising capacity constraints are expected to push wages higher, the latest increase in electricity prices is a downside risk to domestic demand and could potentially become a factor that can affect the interest rate trajectory during next year. We think the

positive factors dominate for now and stick to our forecast of a policy rate at 1.25% in end-2022 and 1.50% in end-2023. After the market pricing turned more hawkish in recent weeks, we think the short end of the NOK curve looks attractive to receive at these levels. Deteriorating risk appetite have stolen the limelight from Norges Bank and pushed EUR/NOK clearly higher in recent days. Read more in What's up, Norway.

Risk/reward favours an upside in EUR/NOK. Fully priced hike in the rates market and expectations on a more hawkish rate path provides little room for a hawkish surprise and much more for a dovish one. Norges Bank weekly flows show that foreigners have added plenty of NOK the past four weeks making positioning a bit more sensitive for an adverse move, i.e. higher EUR/NOK. Long-term drift is higher in EUR/NOK. October seasonality for EUR/NOK points also higher as the currency pair has risen in October for five straight years.

Today's key events

Chart package for the most important events this week here

Time	Country	Event	SEB forecast	Consensus	Last
08:00	NOR	LFS unemployment	Jul	---	4.8
08:45	FRA	Business confidence manufacturing confidence	Sep	110.0 109.0	110.0 110.0
09:15	FRA	PMI manufacturing (Markit) services comp	Sep P	57.0 56.2 5	57.5 56.3 55.9
09:30	GER	PMI manufacturing (Markit/BME) services	Sep P	61.4 60.3 5	62.6 60.8 60.0
10:00	NOR	Norges Bank's rate decision and MPR	0.25	0.25	0
10:00	EA	PMI manufacturing (Markit) services comp	Sep P	60.0 58.5 58.	60.5 58.5 5
10:00	POL	Unemployment rate	Aug	5.8	5.8
10:30	UK	PMI manufacturing (Markit/CIPS) services	Sep P	---	60.3 55.0 54.8
13:00	UK	Bank of England bank rate	0.1	0.1	0.1
13:00	UK	BOE corporate bond target gilt purchase targ	Sep	GBP 20bn 87	GBP 20bn 875bn
14:30	US	Chicago Fed nat. activity index	Aug	0.5	0.53
14:30	US	Initial jobless claims continuing claims		315k ---	332k 2665k
15:45	US	Langer consumer comfort		---	57.7
15:45	US	PMI manufacturing (Markit) services comp	Sep P	61.0 55.0 --	61.1 55.1 55.4
16:00	US	Leading index	Aug	0.5	0.9

Auctions: U.S. to sell bills & 10y TIPS (17:30, 19:00). **Speeches:** Norges Bank's press conference following the rate announcement (10:30). **Other:** ECB publishes Economic Bulletin (10:00), Philippines central bank monetary policy decision, on hold (10:00), South Africa's monetary policy decision (on hold), Taiwan monetary policy decision.

Market data

Market Data 7:09 CET

Equities	Index	Future	FX	Government yields			Credits & Commodities				
S&P 500	1.0%	0.3%	EUR/SEK	10.17	0.0%	US 10Y	1.30%	-2 bps	ITRX Main	49.5	-1 bps
NASDAQ	1.0%	0.2%	USD/SEK	8.69	-0.2%	US 2Y	0.24%	2 bps	ITRX Xover	242	-6 bps
Estoxx 50	1.3%	0.5%	NOK/SEK	1.004	0.0%	Germany 10Y	-0.32%	-1 bps	LME metals	4308	3.1%
OMX	1.1%		EUR/NOK	10.13	0.1%	Germany 2Y	-0.71%	0 bps	Brent fut \$/bl	76.4	0.2%
Nikkei	-0.7%		EUR/USD	1.171	0.2%	Swe 10Y	0.15%	0 bps	Gold fut \$/oz	1765	-0.8%
Shanghai	0.6%		USD/CNY	6.47	0.0%	Swe 2Y	-0.32%	-1 bps	VIX index fut	21.7	-0.4 pts

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