The persistence and signalling power of central bank asset purchase programmes

New York City, US Monetary Policy Forum, 23 February 2018
Lift-off expectations have shifted outward after introduction of “well past”

Expected time to first rate hike

(in months)

Sources: Bloomberg and ECB.
Notes: This chart shows the time horizon (in months) to the first 10 basis points interest rate increase fully priced in the OIS forward curve. The horizon is defined as the difference between (i) the date at which the OIS forward curve exceeds the minimum of the current EONIA and all OIS forward rates by 10 basis points and (ii) the current date, where current refers to the dates on the horizontal axis. The dashed lines refer to major recalibrations of the APP, namely (1) December 2015, (2) March 2016, (3) December 2016 and (4) October 2017. Last observation: 20 February 2018.
Expected short-term rates have become more responsive to macro news.

**Time variation in sensitivity to macro surprises:**

3-month OIS in 1-year

Source: Estimation based on Altavilla, C., G. Giannone and M. Modugno (2017), "Low frequency effects of macroeconomic news on government bond yields," *Journal of Monetary Economics*, Elsevier, vol. 92(C), pp. 31-46. Note: The blue line indicates the sensitivity of forward rates to macroeconomic surprises. The red lines represent the associated confidence bands. When larger (smaller) than one, the sensitivity is higher (lower) than historical regularities.
A stylized representation of stock effects

Central bank demand and secondary market supply

Private investor demand and secondary market supply

Source: ECB.
Sellers to the Eurosystem might increasingly have a higher reservation price.

**Allocation of PSPP purchases across sectors**

(% of Eurosystem purchases of government securities, 12-month cumulated flows)

Source: ECB calculations.

The bond free float fell measurably in the wake of the APP

**Bond free float for selected economies**

(estimated percentage share of outstanding central government bonds held by private sector)

Sources: IMF and ECB calculations.

Notes: The free float is constructed by subtracting from outstanding central government bonds the bond holdings of foreign central banks and of the Eurosystem under the PSPP. Non-monetary policy portfolios are not considered. Foreign exchange holdings are taken from the IMF’s COFER and CPIS survey, where the assumption is made that unallocated reserves are distributed similar to allocated reserves and that 80% of total reserves are invested in central government bonds. This follows a methodology proposed by Arslanalp, S. and T. Tsuda (2012), “Tracking Global Demand for Advanced Economy Sovereign Debt”, IMF Working Paper, WP 12/284. Last observation: September 2017. This is an updated version of the original slide that corrects for a computational error that has mainly affected the historical part of the time series.
The Bund term premium responds non-linearly to the free float.

**10-year Bund term premium and free float**

(term premium: percent per annum; free float: estimated percentage share of outstanding central government bonds held by private sector; estimated slopes for selected periods)

Sources: IMF, Reuters and ECB calculations.

Notes: The free float has been computed as described on the previous slide but has been adjusted to reflect market expectations about PSPP purchases rather than actual PSPP purchases. The Bund term premium is taken from Lemke, W. and T. Werner (2017), “Dissecting long-term Bund yields in the run-up to the ECB’s Public Sector Purchase Programme”, ECB Working Paper No 2106. This is an updated version of the original slide that corrects for a computational error that has mainly affected the historical part of the time series.
Taper tantrum episode suggests stock effect may be less powerful in the US

**Model-based decomposition of 10-year US Treasuries**

\((\%)\)

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The US likely in a steeper part of the curve

10-year term premia and free float

(black dots refer to the United States; red dots to Germany; term premium: percent per annum; free float: estimated percentage share of outstanding marketable or central government bonds held by private sector)

Sources: Haver, IMF and ECB calculations.

Notes: Bund term premia and free float shown only for free float levels above 0.5. The free float for the US is constructed by subtracting from total outstanding marketable US Treasuries the securities held outright by the Federal Reserve and the Treasury holdings of foreign official institutions as reported under TIC. Please refer to the notes of the previous slide for the term premium. Last observation is December 2017.
The stock effect may help temper term premium shocks in the euro area.

**Shock decomposition of 10-year euro area OIS and US Treasury yields**

(percent per annum and percentage points)

Source: ECB staff calculations based on Matheson and Stavrev (2014), “News and Monetary Shocks at a High Frequency: A Simple Approach”, IMF Working Paper WP/14/167. Notes: Shocks are identified by applying sign restrictions in an estimated vector autoregression (VAR) model of long-term bond yields, stock prices, and the nominal effective exchange rate. It is assumed that positive “policy” shocks push up long-term yields, reduce stock prices, appreciate the domestic currency. Positive domestic macro shocks push up the three variables. Foreign shocks move yields in the opposite direction of the exchange rate. For the euro area, the period May 2017 to January 2018 is shown. For the US, the period is May to December 2013.
Spreads over OIS rates indicate rising stock effects in the euro area.

**Bund-OIS spread**

(basis points)

Sources: Haver and ECB calculations.
Last observation: February 2018.
Note: Smooth lines are based on LOWESS regression.

**US 10-year Treasury-OIS spread**

(basis points)

Source: Bloomberg and ECB calculations
Last observation: February 2018.
Note: Smooth line is based on LOWESS regression.
Thank you