

FX Weekly

Plenty to Watch - US Inflation Prints and CB Decisions

The Week Ahead

- **Dollar - Two-way.** Support at 102.00; Resistance at 104.80
- **USD/SGD - Two-way.** Support at 1.3158; Resistance at 1.3350
- **USD/MYR - Two-Way.** Support at 4.40; Resistance at 4.55
- **SGD/MYR - Two-way.** Support at 3.2000; Resistance at 3.4500

Beyond the Carry Trade Unwinding

The rapid carry-trade unwinding had clearly taken a pause since the release of the US Jul ISM services which turned out stronger and comparatively dovish comments by current/former BoJ officials/summary of opinions. The latest was that of the former BoJ board member Makoto Sakurai who opined that the central bank cannot hike at least for the rest of the year but “it’s a tossup whether they can do one hike by next Mar”. We are of the view that neither the Fed nor BoJ would want to aggravate market volatility. With net short JPY contracts now dwindled to just 11K as of 6 Aug (2021 low, Aug 2019-2024 average is net short JPY positions of 51.7K), there is a good chance that the wildest swings of this carry trade unwinding are behind us. That underpins our constructive view on AUD. USD could continue to retrace higher (given aggressive Fed rate cuts pricing) but it will be limited as Fed’s inevitable shift to rate cuts reduce its carry advantage. As inflation continues to ease (falling freight charges, oil prices, raw industrials), more central banks will start to ease monetary policy in earnest and global growth recovery will gain traction and that could bring the USD lower. Asian currencies will also benefit from such an environment. Near-term, USDMYR could swing within 4.40-4.55.

RBNZ to Cut, BSP to Hold

We look for RBNZ to cut OCR by 25bps tomorrow. It would be a close call given that recent 2Q labour report revealed surprisingly strong wage growth (at +0.9%q/q vs. previous 0.8%). As such, there are some expecting this lingering wage pressure to keep RBNZ on hold. On the other hand, there are plenty of other data that suggests that economic activity is weakening - Jun Mfg PMI, Jun card spending, REINZ house sales. Jobless rate has been on the steady increase above pre-pandemic levels. 2Q CPI slid to 3.3%/y from previous 4.0%, closer to the 1-3% inflation target. We expect RBNZ to take its OCR down 25bps to 5.25%. Governor Orr has a habit of not giving markets a lot of forward guidance. OIS imply 60% probability of a cut tomorrow. The quarterly monetary statement will also be released and we expect the guidance for rates to be revised lower. However, that was also likely priced in to some extent when RBNZ did a dovish pivot at its Jul meeting. BSP will also decide on policy. We look for no rate action this week as CPI has drifted above the target range recently.

We continue to hold a medium-term constructive view on the AUD but the direction of this pair within this week is highly dependent on whether its labour market holds up (due Thu) and whether China would have another set of weaker activity data for Jul. This, along with US retail sales will give added clues on whether global growth will see a more severe downturn. These have rather binary effects. However, expectations on China’s data are rather low and as such, we see room for upside surprises and further AUD gains.

Other Key Data/Events We Watch

- Mon:** US NY Fed Inflation Expectations (1Y)
Tue: US PPI, NFIB Small Business Optimism (Jul), GE ZEW Survey (Aug)
Wed: RBNZ Policy Decision (Cut -25bps), US CPI, UK CPI (Jul)
Thu: BSP Policy Decision (No Move)
Fri: Univ. of Mich. Sentiment (Aug P), SG NODX (Jul), MY GDP (2Q)

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Our in-house model implies that S\$NEER is trading at +1.93% to the implied midpoint of 1.3490, suggesting that it remains firm vs trading partner currencies.

Currency	Support/Resistance	Key Data and Events
Dollar Index	S: 102.00; R: 104.00	Mon: -- Tue: NFIB Small Business Optimism (Jul), PPI Final demand (Jul) Wed: CPI (Jul), Real Avg Hourly Earning (Jul) Thu: Empire Mfg (Aug), retail sales (Jul), Philly Fed business outlook (Aug) Fri: Housing starts (Jul), Building permits (Jul), New York Fed Services Business Activity (Aug), Univ. of Mich. Sentiment (Aug P)
EURUSD	S: 1.08; R: 1.11	Mon: -- Tue: ZEW Survey Expectations (Aug) Wed: GDP (2Q P), Employment (2Q P) Thu: -Nil- Fri: Trade (Jun)
AUDUSD	S: 0.64; R: 0.67	Mon: -- Tue: Westpac consumer confidence (Aug), Wage Price index (2Q), NAB business confidence (Jul) Wed: -Nil- Thu: Consumer inflation expectations (Aug), Labour (Jul) Fri: RBA Governor Michele Bullock to appear before parliament
NZDUSD	S: 0.59; R: 0.62	Mon: -- Tue: Net Migration (Jun) Wed: RBNZ policy decision, press conference , Monetary Policy Statement (qtrly) Thu: Food prices (Jul), card spending (Jul) Fri: BusinessNZ Mfg PMI (Jul), PPI input, output (2Q), RBNZ Governor speaks
GBPUSD	S: 1.2670; R: 1.3000	Mon: -- Tue: Average weekly earnings, ILO jobless rate (Jun) Wed: UK CPI, RPI, PPI (Jul) Thu: GDP (2Q P), private consumption, government spending, trade (2Q), Construction output (Jun) Fri: Retail sales (Jul)
USDCAD	S: 1.3600; R: 1.3900	Mon: -- Tue: -Nil- Wed: -Nil- Thu: Wholesale sales ex petroleum (Jun), existing home sales (Jul) Fri: Housing starts (Jul), mfg sales (Jun)
USDJPY	S: 140; R: 150	Mon: -- Tue: PPI (Jul), Machine tool orders (Jul P) Wed: -Nil- Thu: GDP (2Q P), Capacity utilization (Jun) Fri: -Nil-
USDCNH	S: 7.14; R: 7.30	Mon: -- Tue: FDI (by 18 th Aug), Money supply (Jul), New Yuan Loans (Jul), Aggregate Financing (Jul) (due by 15 th Aug) Wed: -Nil- Thu: 1Y MLF, Home prices, IP, Retail sales, FAI ex rural, Property investment, residential property sales, FX Net settlement on behalf of clients (Jul) Fri: -Nil-

Currency	Support/Resistance	Key Data and Events
USDTWD	S: 32.00; R: 33.40	Mon: -- Tue: GDP (2Q P) Wed: -Nil- Thu: -Nil- Fri: -Nil-
USDKRW	S: 1320; R: 1400	Mon: -- Tue: Import price index (Jul), Export price index (Jul), Money supply Jun Wed: Unemployment rate (jul) Thu: -Nil- Fri: -Nil-
USDMYR	S: 4.40; R: 4.55	Mon: -- Tue: -Nil- Wed: -Nil- Thu: -Nil- Fri: GDP (2Q)
USDSGD	S: 1.3158; R: 1.3350	Mon: -- Tue: GDP (2Q F) Wed: -Nil- Thu: -Nil- Fri: Electronic Exports, NODX (Jul)
USDPHP	S: 56.00; R: 58.00	Mon: -- Tue: -Nil- Wed: -Nil- Thu: BSP Policy Decision, Overseas Cash remittances (Jun) Fri: -Nil-
USDIDR	S: 15800; R: 16100	Mon: -- Tue: -Nil- Wed: -Nil- Thu: Trade (Jul), External Debt (Jun) Fri: -Nil-
USDTHB	S: 34.00; R: 36.00	Mon: -- Tue: -Nil- Wed: -Nil- Thu: -Nil- Fri: Gross international Reserves (9 Aug)

G7 FX Views

Currency

Stories of the Week

DXY Index

Eyes on Data. The DXY was last seen around 103.10, little moved in the absence of strong market cues thus far this week. The rapid carry-trade unwinding had clearly taken a pause for much of last week since the release of the US Jul ISM services which turned out stronger and comparatively dovish comments by current/former BoJ officials/summary of opinions. The latest was that of the former BoJ board member Makoto Sakurai who opined that the central bank cannot hike at least for the rest of the year but “it’s a tossup whether they can do one hike by next Mar”. We are of the view that neither the Fed nor BoJ would want to aggravate market volatility. With net short JPY contracts now dwindled to just 11K as of 6 Aug (2021 low), there is a good chance that the wildest swings of this carry trade are behind us. This week, the focus is on US Jul CPI on Wed. For much of this year, inflation seem to have been too sticky for the Fed to pivot with confidence. Core inflation had been on a gradual decline. Consensus looks for core CPI to tick lower to 3.2%/y for Jul from previous 3.3%. An inflation report that meets this expectation would be most benign for markets. There would be further paring of aggressive rate cut bets from current implied 100bps cut expected from Fed Fund Futures.

We see two-way trades for the greenback. Resistance at 102.88 before 104.30. Support at 102.00.

EUR/USD

Buy on Dips. EURUSD steadied around 1.0930, unable to make a sustained move higher. A bearish divergence is seen for the EURUSD with recent highs in price action not able to see a corresponding higher high in MACD forest. We see potential for a deeper pullback towards 1.0870 before the next at 1.0820 (50-dma). Rebounds to meet resistance at 1.1008 (5 Aug high). US inflation data is key concern this week. A stronger print would lead to hawkish repricing of the Fed and lift the USD against most currencies, including the EUR. A slightly softer print could put market at ease that disinflation could progress. We suspect that the most benign outcome is this one while a sharper downside surprise could potentially renew demand/recession concerns. EURUSD could pull back towards the 1.08-support and that could be an opportunity to accumulate.

GBP/USD

Stronger on Data. GBPUSD bounced off its Aug low of around 1.2665 to levels around 1.2810 today. GBPUSD is now back above the 50-dma. Stochastics are oversold and there seems to be more room to rise towards 1.2870-resistance. Cable was lifted by the Jun labour report which turned out stronger than expected at 4.2% vs. previous 4.4%. That said, average weekly earnings ese to 4.5%/y over the past three months vs. previous 5.7%. UK will release CPI, PPI and RPI tomorrow and that is another to watch given how sticky services inflation has been. Should inflation come off considerably tomorrow, we can expect rate cut bets to start piling. We look for another 50bps cut this year for the BoE, somewhat similar to OIS implied. Dent on GBPUSD could be temporary and we hold a constructive view given Starmer’s intention to warm relations with the EU and rate cuts could eventually be supportive of growth.

USDJPY

Recent Retracements in the USDJPY Could Be Temporary. USDJPY was last seen at 147.8, retracing from the likely overshoot of the carry trading unwinding. Even as the BOJ can potentially hold back hikes amid unstable market conditions, weak US data can risk pressuring the Fed to cut at a faster pace, which in turn can have quite a pronounced effect on the JPY. BOJ Deputy Governor has already stated that they will not hike rates when markets are unstable. If anything, at this very point, eyes are more on the Fed than the BOJ with US CPI, PPI eyed closely in the near-term. We see two-way risks with near-term resistance at 145.50 before 151.00. Support at 145.30.

AUD/USD

Forming a Bottom. AUDUSD rose on the back of stronger-than-expected wage growth which steadied at 4.1%/y in 2Q, maintaining its momentum from the quarter prior. Westpac consumer confidence also rose 2.8% in Aug, likely buoyed by the tight labour market and strong wage growth at home. AUDUSD was on the brink of testing the 0.6610-resistance today. Momentum is bullish still. Pair needs to break above the 0.6610-resistance (almost tested twice in recent sessions) to extend towards 0.6630. Labour market report is the next key data for Australia this week, as well as US CPI and China’s activity data. Afterall, the recent AUD decline was triggered by China’s Jun data which

surprised to the downside. At home, with RBA being perceived as hawkish and still likely to remain one of the last to start easing, we remain constructive on the AUD. As we have mentioned before, AUDUSD could take time to form a bottom as global growth recovery is now in question. We see upside risks to the AUD, potentially back towards 0.67. Key support is seen around 0.6470. Resistance is seen around 0.6609 before the next at 0.6640 (50-dma).

NZD/USD

Bullish Bias but Eye RBNZ. NZDUSD continue to rise and was last seen around 0.6030. The double bottom around 0.5850 is still rather compelling to us and a bullish extension could see this NZDUSD re-visit jun high of around 0.62. However, this could be dented temporarily by the upcoming RBNZ where we expect the central bank to kick off its easing cycle and to take the policy rate from 5.50% to 5.25% to support growth. Pullbacks to potentially meet support at 0.570 before 0.5930 and we see them as buying opportunities as we continue to look for global growth to gain a tad more traction and the US to soft land. Resistance at 0.6050 to eye before 0.6070 (50-dma) and then at 0.6200. Ultimate key support at 0.5850. Week ahead has Jun net migration on Tue. RBNZ decision on Wed. Thu has food prices for Jul and card spending. Fri has BusinessNZ Mfg PMI.

Technical Chart Picks:

USDSGD Daily Chart - Two-Way risks



USDSGD retained a downside bias and was last seen around 1.3230.

There are two-way risks at this point for this pair. Markets pricing of Fed rate cuts at 100bps could run the risk of being aggressive and the possibility of a hawkish repricing should US data turn out stronger than expected. However, strong data at this point is also re-assuring for equities and broader sentiment and that could in turn limit the upside for the greenback. Rebounds to meet resistance at 1.3280 before 1.3350. Support at 1.3158.

USDMYR Daily Chart - Bearish



USDMYR last seen at 4.4272. The MYR retains much of its gains from the episode of carry-trade unwinding. UST yields (amid possibility of Fed easing and BNM holding rates), JPY strength, bold government reforms, strong economic growth and more optimistic investor sentiment play their part to lift the currency. We expect further downside as the macro transition to an environment of easing central bank rates and recession concerns support the move lower in UST yields. JPY strengthening could continue a tad while longer amid further carry trade unwind and more bears exit. Key support at 4.4000 and 4.2250.

Source: Bloomberg, Maybank FX Research & Strategy

SGDMYR Daily Chart -Two-way risks



Source: Bloomberg, Maybank FX Research & Strategy

SGDMYR retained a downside bias as MYR retains much of its strength. We see two way risks from here within a range of 3.32-3.39. MACD indicates waning bearish momentum and stochastics are rising from oversold conditions.

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