

GLOBAL & REGIONAL DAILY

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Global markets

Germany's new manufacturing orders — excluding volatile big-ticket orders — remained on a downward trend in December, falling by 2.2%MoM and reaching the lowest level since early 2021. The slump in orders has weighed heavily on industrial production, declining by 1.6%MoM in December, the sixth drop in the last eight months, with the Q4 average down by 1.8% compared to Q3 and 1.5% lower for the full year 2023. In addition to Germany's weak data releases, retail sales in the Eurozone dropped by 1.1%MoM in December, the largest drop since late last year, reflecting consumers' reluctance to increase spending despite decelerating inflation and a strong labor market. Meanwhile, shrugging off fresh comments by Fed and ECB officials suggesting no rush to cut rates, bond markets were firmer today, with the 10-yr UST yield off recent peaks of above 4.15%. In FX markets, the DXY USD index lost some ground, pressured by lower UST yields, though still above 104, keeping the EUR/USD below the technically important level of 1.08.

Greece

According to the annual ERGANI report, the number of employees with a private law employment contract increased by 2.1% to 2.3mn in 2023 from 2.25mn in 2022, and 74.8% (or 1.72mn) of them worked more than 35 hours a week (73.9% in 2022). In 2023 the highest share of employees (16.3% of them or 373.2K) had a monthly salary between €1.0K and €1.2K (12.4% or 279.9K in 2022), followed by employees with a monthly salary between €0.9K and €1.0K (14.4% or 329.9K in 2023, from 11.0% or 247.3K in 2022). The age categories with the highest number of employees were 45-64 and 30-44 years old. In the former category the number of employees rose by 5.2% or 45.2K (to 915.3K in 2023 from 870.1K in 2022) and in the latter dropped by 1.2% or 10.9K (to 896.6K from 907.5K). Attika region had the highest share of employment (50.4% in 2023 from 49.2% in 2022) followed by Central Macedonia (16.2% from 16.0%). Finally, the sector with the larger number of employees was Retail trade (310.4K employees in 2023 from 302.6K in 2022).

CESEE

The saga of December's retail sales data continues with releases from the statistics bureaus in Czechia and Bulgaria. In Czechia, retail sales volume increased by 1.6%YoY, picking up after standing almost idle in November (+0.1%YoY). The reading was stronger than market expectations of a 0.7%YoY increase while some modest expansion continued in monthly terms by 0.2%, marking the third increase in a row. In Bulgaria, retail sales grew by 0.7%YoY in December, cooling down from an above 3.0%YoY growth rate both in November (3.2%YoY) and October (3.1%YoY). On a monthly basis, the volume contracted by 0.6% compared to a milder contraction of 0.2% in November and modest growth rates of 1.3% and 0.7% in October and September respectively. In the same figures released yesterday by Eurostat, polish retail trade rose by 0.6%YoY, returning to growth after falling by 0.8%YoY in November. Still, retail sales fell by 1.3%MoM, worse from the nuanced decrease of 0.1%MoM in November.

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