



March 2023

Market Commentary



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The most recently published economic data varied in recent months, in some cases significantly. While labor market figures in the USA were very strong, production data in Europe remained weak. Meanwhile, a positive development is expected in China, where the lifting of the Corona restrictions will lead to a recovery in economic activity. In Europe, on the other hand, the loss of purchasing power and the effects of restrictive monetary policy will slow the economy and probably lead to a recession. In this context, it seems realistic that the expected economic data will continue to vary in the coming months.

It is likely that the ECB will consider further interest rate steps necessary in March and possibly also in May. The consensus currently assumes a further interest rate step of 50 bp in March. Contrary to past months, there does not yet seem to be any clear consensus in the ECB Council on the coming course of action. If one believes the reports, opinions in the Governing Council now seem to be diverging more strongly again.

Despite signs of a slowdown in economic activity, the Fed will probably continue to maintain the path of interest rate hikes for the time being, as the labor market continues to boom and inflation rates in the services sector remain stubbornly high. On the one hand, the unemployment rate in the U.S. fell to 3.4 percent and, on the other, the downward trend in inflation faltered. Nevertheless, it can be noted that the pace of interest rate hikes by the Fed has already been reduced.

The central banks' focus on data-based forecasts is likely to increase volatility on the financial markets. With the upcoming releases of economic data, especially in the U.S.A., investors will wonder whether this will lead to another interest rate hike and thus further weigh on the economy. In the coming months, it should therefore become clear that the previous interest rate hikes have led to a weakening of the economy and that no further interest rate steps are necessary. At the same time, hopes for a rapid reduction in interest rates will be put to the test. The inversion of the yield curves should therefore accompany us for some time to come.

In Focus

- Different recession effects in the USA and Europe.
- Inflation peak appears to have been passed.
- Interest rate peak in mid-2023 realistic.
- Inverse interest curves remain in place.

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Quantumrock GmbH

Luise-Ullrich-Str. 4
82031 Grünwald
Phone: +49 89 255 421 92 E-Mail: info@quantumrock.ai

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