

## Global Economics Wrap-Up: January 9, 2026

### Global Economics

1/9/26 1:00PM ET

- How concerned should we be about an AI-related job apocalypse?
  - We have previously found that AI can potentially automate tasks that account for 25% of all US work hours, resulting in a 15% economy-wide productivity boost after redeploying hours into other occupations.
  - Although AI is likely to render many occupations permanently obsolete (our baseline forecast assumes that 6-7% of workers will be displaced during the adoption process) it will also create new roles that drive long-run job growth:
    - AI can create new occupations directly, like how computers have created millions of jobs in software engineering, e-commerce, content creation, and video games.
    - New jobs can also be created by enabling increased occupational specialization, as has happened in healthcare over time.
    - AI-driven income gains can also indirectly lead to new discretionary service occupations via higher income and demand, like how employment has increased in pet care, nail salons, educational support/tutoring, and athletic coaching occupations over the last 30 years.
  - Even under our optimistic assessment that AI will create new jobs, we anticipate an increase in frictional unemployment as workers transition to new jobs.
    - We expect a peak gross unemployment increase of a bit more than ½pp under our baseline outlook, but see risks skewed toward large unemployment rate increases.
- DM manufacturing delivery times lengthen in December final PMI release:
  - The global composite PMI fell by -0.7pt in December to 52.0, reflecting a decline in services (-0.9pt to 52.4) and manufacturing (-0.1pt to 50.4).
  - Manufacturing suppliers' delivery times lengthened (-1.0pt to 46.6) in DMs and remained unchanged (flat at 49.9pt) in EMs.
  - The manufacturing new export orders PMI component declined in several of the US's major trading partners in December and remains in

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contractionary territory for all major economies besides India.

## US Economics

1/9/26 11:00AM ET

- Nonfarm payrolls rose by 50k in December, and the unemployment rate declined to 4.4%:
  - Payroll growth was revised down by 8k in November and by 68k in October.
  - The decline in the unemployment rate largely reflected a 125k decline in unemployed government workers following a shutdown-related 193k increase in the November report.
  - Today's employment report cements the case for skipping a cut at the January FOMC meeting.
- We forecast a larger decline in inflation in 2026 than consensus, the FOMC, and the market expect:
  - While progress on core PCE inflation stalled in 2025 at 2.8% yoy, the remaining overshoot reflects the one-time impact of tariffs and the earlier impact of now mostly complete catch-up inflation.
  - We expect core PCE to fall to 2.1% by end-2026 (30bp below the consensus and FOMC forecasts) for three reasons:
    - The tariff boost should fall from 0.5pp now to 0.2pp by December (though not before rising to 0.8pp by mid-2026).
    - Shelter should slow from 3.7% yoy to 2.3%, below its pre-pandemic pace.
    - Wage growth has fallen to target-consistent levels and will put downward pressure on nonhousing services inflation.
  - But the next two months should be firmer:
    - December will get a roughly 11bp boost (in core CPI terms) after delayed data collection depressed measured prices in November.
    - January should see one last "January effect," especially if companies pass through more tariff costs in their annual price resets.
- Early career workers are likely to adjust more flexibly to AI-related job displacement:
  - Over the past three decades, workers displaced from disrupted occupations—those with the largest employment declines—experienced significantly worse labor market outcomes.
    - They took a month longer to find new jobs.
    - They faced real earnings losses of over 4% when transitioning between full-time jobs after a layoff.
    - They were 5-10pp more likely to become long-term unemployed or exit the labor force entirely.
  - But older workers bore the largest real earnings losses (over 10%), while

younger workers—especially those under 30—transitioned to different occupation categories at significantly higher rates.

## Europe Economics

1/9/26 9:50AM ET

- German industrial data generally beat expectations over the past week:
  - Manufacturing orders increased by +5.6% mom in November, notably above consensus expectations.
    - The headline number was driven by major orders in other transport equipment and fabricated metals, likely reflecting rising defence spending.
  - Industrial turnover increased by +2.7% mom in November thanks to strong domestic sales.
  - Industrial production was also stronger than consensus had expected at +0.8% mom, reflecting strong capital goods and autos production.
  - While other data points over the week were a bit more mixed, we have raised our Q4 German GDP tracking estimate to +0.3%; we continue to see area-wide GDP growth at +0.3%.
- Euro area inflation data was softer than expectations for December:
  - In the flash release for December, headline HICP inflation ticked down by 0.18pp to 1.96% yoy and core HICP inflation went down 12bp to 2.29% yoy.
  - We estimate that seasonally adjusted sequential core inflation was 0.17% mom in December, up slightly from 0.16% mom in the November reading.
  - Across major components, sequential goods inflation went down further to -0.03% mom, while sequential services inflation ticked up to 0.28% mom.
  - We now expect core inflation to average 2.1% in 2026 (vs 2.2% previously), reaching 1.8% by end-2026 and 1.9% by end-2027, slightly weaker than the ECB staff December projections.
- UK PMIs on the soft side:
  - Final composite PMI for December was revised down to 51.4 (versus a flash estimate of 52.1), with the service sector showing a slower pace of expansion than initially estimated.
  - The construction PMI also remained weak in December at 40.1, only slightly above its November low, with data pointing to weakness across the housing, commercial, and civil engineering segments.
- BoE's Decision Maker Panel survey data for December:
  - Points to weak employment intentions, with year-ahead expected job growth dropping to -0.4% (from -0.2%) on a 3-month average basis.
  - The survey also showed a slight decrease in firms' price and wage expectations for the year ahead, albeit both series remain at elevated levels.

**Asia/EM Economics**

1/8/26 9:55PM ET

- We published our 2026 economic outlooks for Asian economies over the past week:
  - For China, we forecast real GDP growth of 4.8% in 2026, above the 4.5% consensus.
    - Strong manufacturing competitiveness should drive export volume growth of 5–6% and a current account surplus of 4.2% of GDP, well above consensus.
    - While the property downturn continues, its impact on GDP is diminishing as the sector shrinks.
    - Weak household consumption may persist, but increased government spending and a rebound in investment should provide an offset.
  - Japan's economy is expected to grow steadily by 0.8% in 2026, led by solid consumption and capex.
    - The BOJ will likely resume a semi-annual pace of rate hikes (we forecast a hike to 1% in July).
    - Expansionary fiscal policies will require close monitoring to ensure long-term fiscal soundness.
  - Australia and New Zealand are reaccelerating, with 2026 GDP growth expected at 2.4% and 3.1%, respectively.
    - Private demand is supported by rising income, but inflation risks may prompt rate hikes.
  - India's economy is set for continued growth after a proactive policy shift in 2025.
    - INR's underperformance has likely ended, supported by a favorable external balance.
  - We expect export volume growth in Korea and Taiwan to remain solid (particularly in Taiwan) but decelerate from 2025.
    - Domestic consumption growth remains weak.
    - Monetary policies are likely to diverge, with Taiwan hiking and Korea cutting.
- China's consumer goods trade-in program was extended, but with lower subsidies.
  - China's consumer goods trade-in program was extended, with 2026 subsidies at RMB 250 billion—less than 2025.
    - We expect nominal retail sales growth to slow from 3.8% in 2025 to 2.7% in 2026.
  - USD/CNY broke below 7.0 at end-2025, driven by broad USD weakness and year-end FX settlement demand.
    - Recent policy signals indicate PBOC may prefer a stronger CNY but aims to avoid rapid appreciation.

- We continue to project USD/CNY to reach 6.95/6.90/6.85 in 3/6/12-months.
- Asia and EM manufacturing PMIs were mixed in December:
  - Mainland China (both the official and unofficial PMIs increased), Japan, and small open economies (Korea, Taiwan, and some ASEAN) saw stronger manufacturing PMIs, while India's declined.
  - Manufacturing PMIs softer on net in EM ex-Asia, with downticks in 5 out of 7 countries, especially in Latam.
  - Services PMIs were softer in India and Japan.

### GDP Forecast Tracker: GS vs. Consensus

Real GDP Growth:	Annual Average							Q4/Q4
	2024	2025		2026		2027		2026
	Actual	GS	Consensus	GS	Consensus	GS	Consensus	GS
DMs								
US	2.8	2.2	2.0	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.5
Euro Area	0.8	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.4
Germany	-0.5	0.3	0.3	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.5	1.5
France	1.1	0.9	0.8	1.2	1.0	0.9	1.1	0.9
Italy	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9	1.0
Spain	3.5	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.2	1.8	1.8	2.0
Japan	-0.2	1.2	1.2	0.8	0.8	1.2	0.8	1.1
UK	1.1	1.4	1.4	0.9	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.4
Canada	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.9	1.8	1.7
Australia	1.0	1.9	1.9	2.4	2.2	2.6	2.3	2.6
EMs								
China	5.0	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.5	4.7	4.3	4.9
India	6.7	7.6	7.6	6.7	6.5	6.8	6.4	7.0
Brazil	3.4	2.3	2.3	1.8	1.7	2.3	1.9	2.8
Russia	4.3	0.5	0.8	1.2	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.7
South Korea	2.0	1.1	1.1	1.9	2.0	2.3	1.8	1.5
Mexico	1.4	0.3	0.4	1.3	1.3	2.1	2.0	2.0
World	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.9

Note: Global GDP growth rates aggregated using market exchange rate weights. IMF forecast used for India 2027 consensus value.

Source: Bloomberg, Goldman Sachs Global Investment Research

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