

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 | | | |
| | 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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