

# PRO GROWTH JAPAN—ONE TEAM, ONE DREAM

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We expect added Bank of Japan (BOJ) action. A move as early as this week is possible—the BOJ policy board meets Oct 7, but I personally think that a move at the next meeting, on October 30, is more likely. That's because the key in Japan is coordination of policy, with both [monetary](#) and [fiscal policy](#) being eased together. Team Abe<sup>1</sup> is very focused on reasserting the “one team, one dream” focus; so I expect a simultaneous and well-coordinated announcement of both monetary and fiscal easing. **A ¥600 Trillion Nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Target for the BOJ?** In my view, it is also possible that the BOJ will accept Prime Minister Abe's newly announced nominal GDP target of ¥600 trillion—a move from a [Consumer Price Index \(CPI\)](#) target to a nominal GDP target is in the cards, in my view. In essence, this would mean that the BOJ promises to stay accommodative until nominal GDP hits ¥600 trillion (it currently is at about ¥510 trillion)<sup>2</sup>. This would not only free the BOJ from the terms-of-trade and commodity price-related [volatility](#) of the CPI but would significantly raise the commitment credibility of a coordinated all-out pro-growth policy. **A Supplementary Budget Boost** For an added fiscal boost, we expect a supplementary budget of around ¥5 trillion, with ¥1–¥2 trillion in added public works and the remainder for childcare and elderly support. Given political schedules, it looks unlikely that a supplementary budget proposal would be ready by October 7, but October 30 is possible. **A Sizable Boost from the BOJ** For the BOJ, we expect a sizable increase in exchange-traded fund (ETF) and [real estate investment trust \(REIT\)](#) purchases as well as a broadening of the bond-buying mandate to include local and regional [government bonds](#) in addition to “[zaito](#)” bonds (issued by the fiscal investment and loan program administered by the Ministry of Finance); currently only national government-issued [Japanese government bonds \(JGB\)](#) are eligible. For ETFs, the BOJ has purchased ¥2.49 trillion in ETFs year-to-date, which is roughly 83% of its ¥3 trillion target. This is well ahead of schedule—we are only 67% through the year. I expect the BOJ to double its ETF purchase budget to ¥6 trillion (from the current ¥3 trillion)<sup>3</sup>. Similarly, [Japanese real estate investment trust \(J-REIT\)](#) purchases are also ahead of budget, with ¥76.6 billion year-to-date, i.e., 85% of the budgeted ¥90 billion. I expect the J-REIT budget to double as well, to ¥180 or ¥200 billion (from the current ¥90 billion)<sup>4</sup>. **Negative Rates?** There is some discussion about the BOJ's introduction of negative [interest rates](#). Here, we are not convinced this will happen. A primary reason is the potentially negative impact of negative rates on the banking system's [profit margins](#). Specifically, the upcoming privatization of the Postal Bank reduces the probability of negative rates as a policy tool in Japan, in our view. This being said, we are moving closer to [Abenomics](#) rebuilding its pro-growth credentials. In our view, the potential for a de facto new BOJ policy regime toward nominal GDP targeting is poised to reignite global and local investor interest in yen risk assets, equities and real estate. The coming four weeks will likely be of key importance in verifying our thesis. <sup>1</sup>Refers to Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe and his supporters. <sup>2</sup>Source: Bank of Japan, as of 9/30/15. <sup>3</sup>Source: Bank of Japan, as of 9/30/15. <sup>4</sup>Source: Bank of Japan, as of 9/30/15.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Monetary policy** : Actions of a central bank or other regulatory committee that determine the size and rate of growth of the money supply, which in turn affects interest rates.

**Fiscal Policy** : Government spending policies that influence macroeconomic conditions. These policies affect tax rates, interest rates and government spending, in an effort to control the economy.

**Gross domestic product (GDP)** : The sum total of all goods and services produced across an economy.

**Consumer Price Index (CPI)** : A measure that examines the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services, such as transportation, food and medical care. The CPI is calculated by taking price changes for each item in the predetermined basket of goods and averaging them; the goods are weighted according to their importance. Changes in CPI are used to assess price changes associated with the cost of living.

**Volatility** : A measure of the dispersion of actual returns around a particular average level.&nbsp;bsp.

**Real estate investment trust (REIT)** : Investment structure containing a basket of different exposures to real estate, be it directly in properties or in mortgages. Returns predominantly relate to changes in property values and income from rental payments.

**U.S. Treasury Bond** : a debt security issued by the United States government.

**Zaito institutions** : Public corporations participating in the government's fiscal investment and loan program, known as "zaito.&rdquo;

**Japanese Government Bond (JGB)** : A bond issued by the government of Japan. The government pays interest on the bond until the maturity date. At the maturity date, the full price of the bond is returned to the bondholder. Japanese government bonds play a key role in the financial securities market in Japan.

**Japan real estate investment trusts (J-REITs)** : Investment structure containing a basket of different exposures to real estate, be it directly in properties or in mortgages traded on the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Returns predominantly relate to changes in property values and income from rental payments.

**Interest rates** : The rate at which interest is paid by a borrower for the use of money.

**Profit margins** : Net income divided by total sales. Higher values indicate a greater fraction of each dollar of sales being left to the firm and its owners after expenses are accounted for.

**Abenomics** : Series of policies enacted after the election of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on December 16, 2012 aimed at stimulating Japan's economic growth.