

Macro and Volatility Update

MONDAY 26 OCTOBER 2026 • LONDON 12:00

FOR PROFESSIONAL INVESTORS ONLY

GLOBAL MACRO & VOLATILITY / WEEKLY REPORT

Extreme fear as implied volatility and put skew rise

Sentiment is at an extreme and index option pricing has moved with it. Libella's Fear/Greed Monitor reads 16, extreme fear, while 30-day implied volatility rose in each of the S&P 500, Nasdaq-100 and Russell 2000 proxies over five sessions and put-over-call skew widened.

Libella Insights • 3-minute read • Full report: 5 pages

THE WEEK IN NUMBERS • WEEK ENDED 23 OCTOBER

16

Libella Fear / Greed,
extreme fear, 23 Oct

19.45

VIX index,
23 Oct close

3.28

Semi ETF (SMH) put/call
volume ratio, 23 Oct

-0.5%

S&P 500,
5 days to 23 Oct

-7.7%

Libella long vs short
consensus basket, 5 days

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Sentiment is extreme. All seven components are in fear or extreme fear, with the lowest scores in junk bond demand (1), safe haven demand (5) and breadth (8). Latest component readings are dated 20–26 October.

Implied volatility and put skew rose. SPY 30-day implied volatility rose 1.6 volatility points to 15.2% and 25-delta put-over-call skew widened 1.1 points to 6.0; QQQ implied volatility rose 3.2 points to 24.7%.

Crowded longs lagged. On Friday 23 October the Libella US consensus long fell 0.40% and the consensus-short stock group fell 0.77%, but over five sessions longs are down 1.35% against a 6.35% gain for shorts, a 7.7% gap.

Extreme fear is matched by rising index volatility

Libella's Fear/Greed Monitor stands at 16, down from 47 a month ago, with all seven components in fear or extreme fear. SPY 30-day implied volatility rose 1.6 points over five sessions to 15.2%, 1.60 times trailing 20-day realised volatility of 9.5%. Put-over-call skew widened 1.1 points to 6.0, so both the level and the downside tilt of implied volatility increased.

Index and AI volatility carry different premiums

SPY implied volatility is 1.60 times trailing realised, compared with 1.23 times for the ratio of average implied to average realised volatility across 12 AI names. Both implied (51.3%) and realised (41.6%) volatility are substantially higher in the AI group.

Crowded longs weaken as shorted stocks advance

Through 23 October, Libella's consensus-long group fell 1.35% over five sessions and 5.49% over one month, while consensus-short stocks gained 6.35% and 2.39%, respectively. This divergence is consistent with pressure on crowded long/short trades.

Momentum reinforces the positioning divide

The consensus-long group's 14-day RSI stood at 34, compared with 57 for consensus shorts. The weaker momentum in consensus longs highlights the underperformance of crowded-long stocks.

Dispersion widened beneath the index

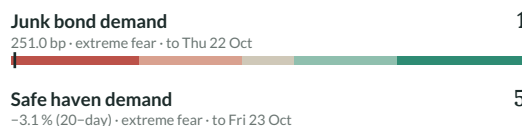
Over five sessions to 23 October the S&P 500 fell 0.47%, the Nasdaq-100 0.79% and the semiconductor index 3.21%, while consensus-short stocks gained 6.35% and consensus longs fell 1.35%.

LIBELLA FEAR / GREED MONITOR



1 DAY AGO 26 Fear	1 WEEK AGO 23 Extreme fear
1 MONTH AGO 47 Neutral	1 YEAR AGO 58 Greed

WEAKEST TWO OF SEVEN COMPONENTS



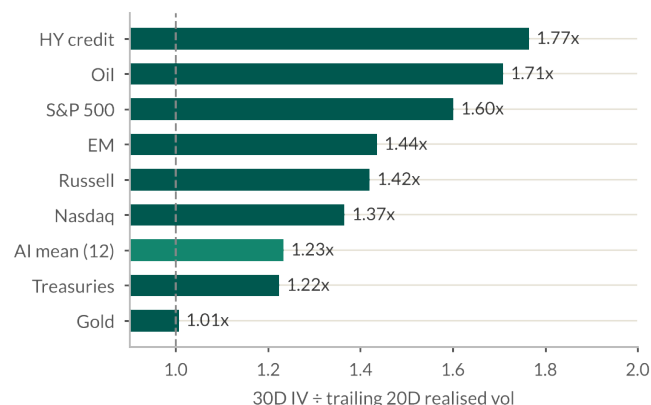
All seven components and the bands are in the appendix. Scores are relative to the past year only.

Index Volatility and Put Skew Rose Together

Implied volatility rose across equity indices as put skew widened

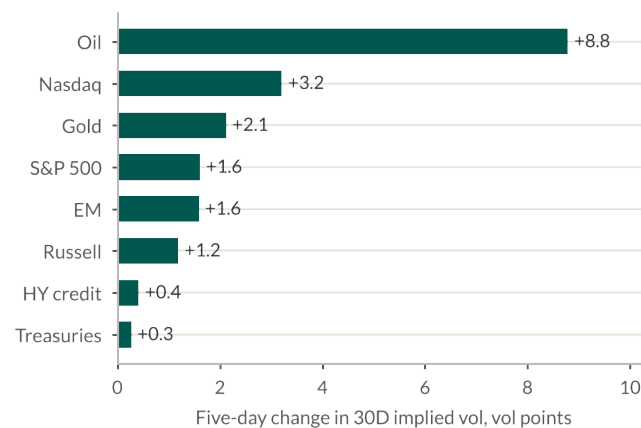
Thirty-day implied volatility rose 1.6 volatility points to 15.2% in the S&P 500 proxy (SPY), 3.2 to 24.7% in the Nasdaq-100 proxy (QQQ) and 1.2 to 20.3% in the Russell 2000 proxy (IWM). Put-over-call skew widened by 1.1, 1.0 and 1.3 points to 6.0, 7.8 and 4.9, so 25-delta puts became more expensive in implied-volatility terms relative to comparable calls. SPY put/call volume was 2.85, up from 1.94 at the 16 October reference, and IWM's rose to 4.18 from 1.81, so put volume exceeded call volume in both; QQQ's eased to 1.68 from 1.84.

Implied volatility is above trailing realised in every proxy; HY credit, Oil and S&P 500 have the highest ratios



30D implied vol ÷ trailing 20D realised vol; dashed line = 1.0

Implied volatility rose in all eight proxies; Oil, Nasdaq and Gold rose most



Five sessions to 23 Oct, vol points

ASSET (PROXY)	30D IMPLIED VOL	TRAILING 20D REALISED	5D CHANGE IN IV (PTS)
S&P 500 (SPY)	15.2	9.5	+1.6
Nasdaq 100 (QQQ)	24.7	18.1	+3.2
Russell 2000 (IWM)	20.3	14.3	+1.2
Emerging mkts (EEM)	26.8	18.7	+1.6
Treasuries (TLT)	13.6	11.1	+0.3
HY credit (HYG)	6.2	3.5	+0.4
Gold (GLD)	21.7	21.6	+2.1
Oil (USO)	54.8	32.0	+8.8
AI: average of 12 names	51.3	41.6	+0.9

Vol % annualised. 5D = five sessions to 23 Oct (reference 16 Oct). The AI row averages single-stock vol and is not the volatility of an investable portfolio.

Put skew has widened since 20 October

SPY's 25-delta put-over-call skew was 4.8 points on 20 October and 6.0 on 23 October. QQQ moved from 6.6 to 7.8, and the median of AI-screen stocks from 2.3 to 2.6. The history is four sessions long and uses the expiry nearest 30 days, so it describes the recent move, not a long-run comparison.

Terms. ATM volatility is the scale of movement priced around current market levels. Skew is the gap between put and comparable call implied volatility; 25-delta skew compares them at matched absolute forward deltas and does not measure the far tail. Surface curvature describes the shape of implied volatility across strikes. Tail protection is protection against larger, less frequent moves. Convexity is the curvature of an option's value with respect to the underlying; gamma measures this locally. The two curvature concepts are not interchangeable.

AI Volatility: Premiums Are Uneven After Meta's Results

Implied vol rose in 10 of 12 AI single names over five sessions, led by NVDA (+4.3 points) and AMZN (+3.8), while META fell 7.5 points after its 21 October results. IV/RV ranged from 0.90 (META) to 1.83 (GOOGL). The AI average is a convenience, not the volatility of an investable AI portfolio. Four names show distinct developments.

NVDA Leads the rise in implied volatility

IV 43.1% RV 28.8% IV/RV 1.50x 5D IV +4.3 5D skew +1.2

NVDA implied volatility rose 4.3 points to 43.1%, the largest increase among the 12 names, against trailing realised volatility of 28.8%. Put-over-call skew widened 1.2 points to 6.1, the highest in the group at 14% of ATM volatility.

META Largest fall after results

IV 37.2% RV 41.2% IV/RV 0.90x 5D IV -7.5 5D skew -0.3

META implied volatility fell 7.5 points to 37.2%, the largest decline among the 12 names, over a window that includes its 21 October results. It is the only name with implied volatility below trailing realised (41.2%, 0.90 times); that realised figure includes the days around the results.

GOOGL Highest IV/RV ratio

IV 37.4% RV 20.4% IV/RV 1.83x 5D IV +0.4 5D skew +0.3

GOOGL implied volatility is 37.4% against trailing realised of 20.4%, the highest ratio in the group at 1.83 times, ahead of results on 28 October. Implied volatility rose 0.4 points on the week and skew is modest at 1.8 points.

CRWV Highest level of implied volatility

IV 107.6% RV 88.5% IV/RV 1.22x 5D IV -1.5 5D skew -3.6

CRWV implied volatility is 107.6% against trailing realised of 88.5%, the highest level in the group at 1.22 times. Implied volatility fell 1.5 points over five sessions and put-over-call skew narrowed 3.6 points to 3.1.

Earnings dates

NAME	REPORT DATE	STATUS	30D IV	1D IV CHG	5D IV CHG	IV / RV	MOVE TO EXPIRY	1-DAY EQUIV.
META	Wed 21 Oct	Reported	37.2	-1.7	-7.5	0.90	n/a	n/a
MSFT	Wed 28 Oct	Scheduled	32.6	-0.5	+0.9	1.70	5.4% (30 Oct)	2.4%
GOOGL	Wed 28 Oct	Scheduled	37.4	-0.6	+0.4	1.83	6.1% (30 Oct)	2.7%
AMZN	Thu 29 Oct	Scheduled	43.9	+1.0	+3.8	1.38	n/a	n/a

Meta reported on 21 October, inside the five-session window to 23 October, so its implied-vol change combines the results with other moves, and its nearest expiry is after the event. Microsoft and Alphabet are scheduled for 28 October and Amazon for 29 October; Amazon's nearest expiry (28 October) falls before its results, so its move is not shown. Move to expiry is the at-the-money straddle price as a percentage of spot to the nearest expiry; the 1-day equivalent divides it by the square root of the five trading days to expiry and does not isolate the earnings-day move. These are straddle-based measures, not probability bounds. 1D = close to close, 22 to 23 October; 5D = from the 16 October reference. Sources: Meta, Microsoft, Alphabet and Amazon investor relations pages.

What could raise volatility

Results from Microsoft and Alphabet (28 October) and Amazon (29 October) fall inside the 30-day window and can lift implied vol into the event, with put-side repricing in chips able to extend to the index surface.

What could ease implied volatility

The passing of scheduled events can remove event premium, while subdued realised volatility can allow implied volatility to drift lower.

Crowding and implied volatility remain the key tests

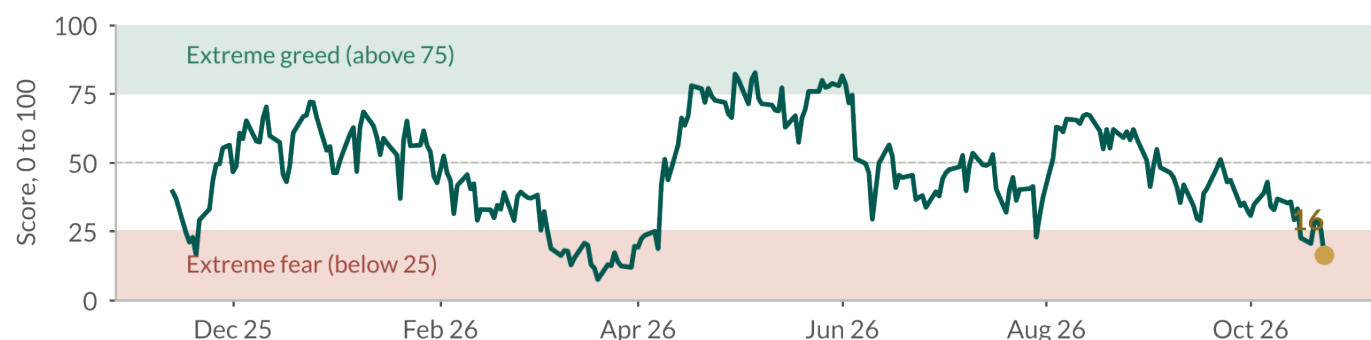
Weak sentiment has been accompanied by higher implied volatility and wider put skew. Watch whether implied volatility keeps rising into the 28 and 29 October results, whether consensus longs keep lagging consensus shorts, and whether breadth and credit-sensitive indicators stabilise.

Technical Appendix: Fear/Greed, Cross-Asset and Surface Detail

A1 Libella Fear/Greed Monitor: seven components

COMPONENT	READING	BAND	SCORE	AS OF
Market momentum	0.8 % v 125-day average	extreme fear	11	Fri 23 Oct
Stock price strength	1.6 % of members	fear	35	Fri 23 Oct
Stock price breadth	53.3 index	extreme fear	8	Fri 23 Oct
Put and call options	0.60 ratio	fear	44	Tue 20 Oct
Market volatility	19.8 % v 50-day average	extreme fear	15	Mon 26 Oct
Safe haven demand	-3.1 % (20-day)	extreme fear	5	Fri 23 Oct
Junk bond demand	251.0 bp	extreme fear	1	Thu 22 Oct

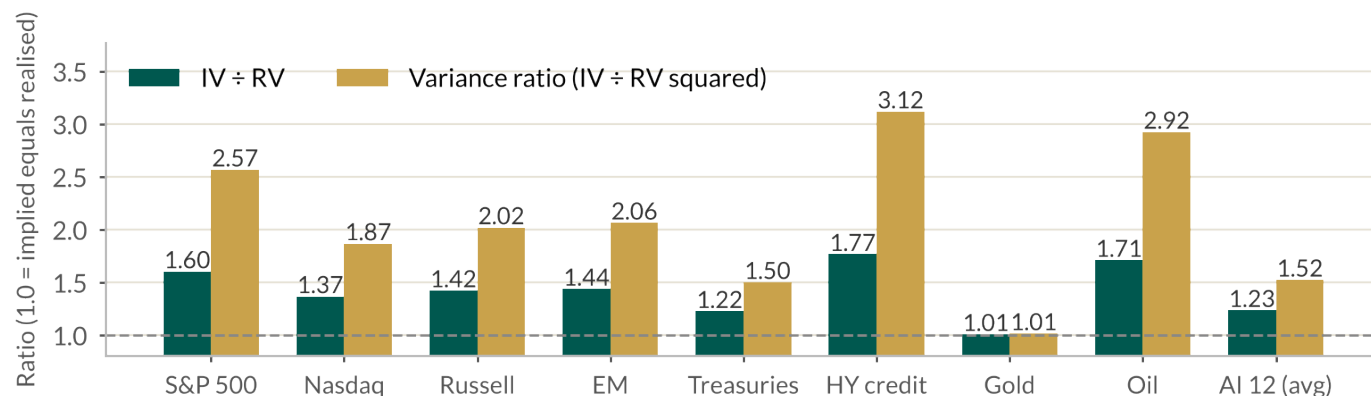
The Fear/Greed score is 16, in extreme fear, after 47 a month ago



Daily score, last 12 months; shaded bands are extreme fear below 25 and extreme greed above 75. Each component is a percentile within its own trailing 252 sessions, equally weighted. Score shown to the 23 Oct close (live 26 Oct reading: 17); component readings are the latest available, including live VIX on 26 Oct; put/call is to 20 Oct and junk bond demand to 22 Oct. Breadth and strength use today's S&P 500 members (survivorship). Not comparable with third-party indices.

A2 Cross-asset detail

Implied exceeds realised in every proxy; HY credit, Oil and S&P 500 have the highest IV/RV ratios



Variance ratio = (IV ÷ RV) squared. Percentile columns are omitted until at least 12 weeks of stored history exist. The AI bars use the ratio of average implied to average realised vol across 12 single names, not an investable portfolio.

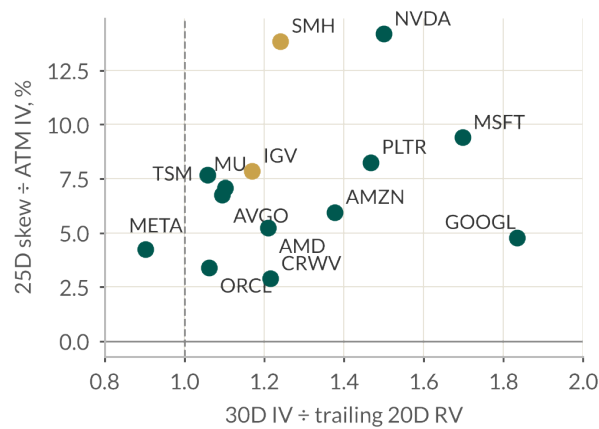
A3 S&P 500 and cross-asset surface, 30D, 25-delta

ASSET (PROXY)	25D PUT IV	ATM IV	25D CALL IV	SKEW P - C	NORM SKEW	BF25	5D SKEW
S&P 500 (SPY)	18.9	15.2	12.9	+6.0	39%	+0.7	+1.1
Nasdaq 100 (QQQ)	29.2	24.7	21.4	+7.8	32%	+0.6	+1.0
Russell 2000 (IWM)	23.3	20.3	18.4	+4.9	24%	+0.6	+1.3
Emerging mkts (EEM)	29.8	26.8	25.0	+4.8	18%	+0.6	n/a
Treasuries (TLT)	13.7	13.6	14.0	-0.3	-2%	+0.3	-0.6
HY credit (HYG)	n/a	6.2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gold (GLD)	23.1	21.7	21.4	+1.7	8%	+0.6	+1.5
Oil (USO)	53.4	54.8	60.4	-7.0	-13%	+2.1	-2.8

Skew = 25D put IV - 25D call IV; normalised skew = skew ÷ ATM IV; BF25 = (25D put IV + 25D call IV) ÷ 2 - ATM IV. 25D is absolute forward delta, not premium-adjusted. 5D = five sessions to 23 Oct (16 Oct reference); n/a where the chain gave no usable 25-delta quotes. 25-delta skew compares put and call implied volatility at matched absolute forward deltas; it does not measure the far tail.

B1 AI single names: skew against premium

NVDA carries the highest normalised skew; GOOGL, MSFT and NVDA the highest IV/RV ratios



Reading the chart. Each dot is one name. Further right means implied vol is higher relative to trailing realised; higher up means 25-delta put-over-call skew is larger relative to ATM vol. Gold dots are the SMH and IGV ETFs.

What it shows. Premium and downside pricing are not the same thing: GOOGL and MSFT have the highest ratios but modest skew. A high ratio can reflect low trailing realised vol rather than high implied vol, and META sits left of 1.0 because its realised vol includes the days around its results.

Limit. Twelve selected single stocks, not an index or investable basket.

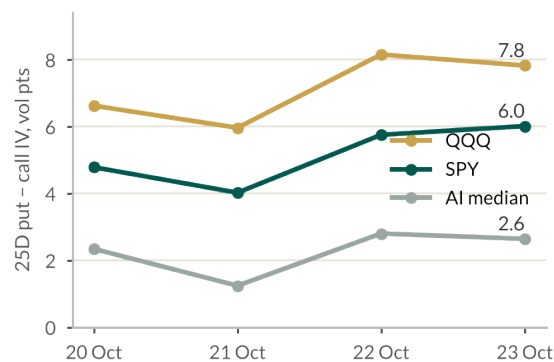
B2 AI single names and ETFs, 30D

NAME	ATM IV	TRAIL RV	IV / RV	25D PUT IV	25D CALL IV	SKEW P - C	NORM. SKEW	BF25	5D IV CHG	5D RR25 CHG
NVDA	43.1	28.8	1.50	45.7	39.6	+6.1	14%	-0.5	+4.3	-1.2
AVGO	41.2	37.7	1.09	42.7	39.9	+2.8	7%	+0.1	+1.5	-1.2
AMD	61.2	50.6	1.21	62.9	59.7	+3.2	5%	+0.1	+1.1	-1.3
TSM	34.5	32.6	1.06	36.2	33.6	+2.6	8%	+0.5	+1.9	-0.7
MU	53.6	48.7	1.10	55.9	52.1	+3.8	7%	+0.4	+3.3	-1.4
MSFT	32.6	19.2	1.70	34.1	31.1	+3.1	9%	+0.1	+0.9	+0.0
GOOGL	37.4	20.4	1.83	38.2	36.4	+1.8	5%	-0.1	+0.4	-0.3
AMZN	43.9	31.9	1.38	45.1	42.5	+2.6	6%	-0.1	+3.8	-0.2
META	37.2	41.2	0.90	38.4	36.8	+1.6	4%	+0.4	-7.5	+0.3
ORCL	58.8	55.4	1.06	59.9	57.9	+2.0	3%	+0.2	+1.3	-0.1
PLTR	65.1	44.4	1.47	67.7	62.4	+5.4	8%	-0.1	+1.6	-0.3
CRWV	107.6	88.5	1.22	110.5	107.4	+3.1	3%	+1.4	-1.5	+3.6
ETFs										
SMH	41.4	33.4	1.24	44.8	39.1	+5.7	14%	+0.5	+4.2	-0.5
IGV	33.0	28.2	1.17	35.3	32.7	+2.6	8%	+1.0	-0.9	+0.5

RR25 = 25D call IV - 25D put IV, so its level equals minus skew; the last column is the five-session change from the 16 October reference (negative = put skew steepened). 25D is absolute forward delta; American-style options use a European model. Trailing RV is 20-day close-to-close.

B3 Put-over-call skew since 20 October

Skew widened in SPY and QQQ; the AI median moved less



What it shows. SPY skew 4.8 to 6.0; QQQ 6.6 to 7.8; AI-screen median 2.3 to 2.6 vol points (25-delta put IV minus call IV, expiry nearest 30 days). SPY is an ETF proxy and is not the SPX surface that underlies the VIX.

Method. IV is solved from bid/ask mids with Black-Scholes, using the 13-week T-bill rate; dividends are ignored. 25-delta put and call IVs are interpolated in delta between bracketing quotes, never taken from the nearest strike. Constant 30-day IV interpolates total variance between the two expiries bracketing 30 days. A quote is used only if two-sided with spread within 35% of mid (or \$0.10).

Limit. Four sessions of skew history and eight snapshots of ATM history exist, so percentiles are not shown until at least 12 weeks are stored.

Data notes. Options data: Libella option-chain snapshots from Yahoo Finance (YFDP exchange data), about 15 minutes delayed, close slot of 23 October. Realised vol is 20-day close-to-close, annualised by the square root of 252. VIX: 23 October close of 19.45. Source: Cboe, via Yahoo Finance and Portfolio Terminal. Rising realised volatility reduces IV/RV if implied volatility is unchanged; a lower ratio does not necessarily indicate calmer markets. Put/call figures use total listed volume and do not show whether options were bought or sold. Libella data: EODHD prices, the Fear/Greed Monitor and the Crowding Monitor (13F quarter-end holdings are disclosed up to 45 days after quarter-end, so holdings can be substantially older than 45 days; the latest filings are for 30 June 2026; short interest lags about two weeks; groups use today's names; RSI is descriptive). Earnings dates: Meta, Microsoft, Alphabet and Amazon investor relations pages.

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