Resolution of Policy Uncertainty and Sudden Declines in Volatility

Dante Amengual† CEMFI
Dacheng Xiu‡ Chicago Booth

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Abstract

We introduce downward volatility jumps into a general non-affine modeling framework of the term structure of variance. With variance swaps and S&P 500 returns, we find that downward volatility jumps are associated with a resolution of policy uncertainty, in particular through statements from Federal Open Market Committee meetings and speeches of the Federal Reserve chairman. We also find that such jumps are priced with positive risk premia, which reflect the price of the “put protection” offered by the Federal Reserve. Ignoring downward volatility jumps may lead to an exaggeration of the negative total variance risk premia, hence a biased-interpretation of the price of tail events. We also find variance risk premia tend to be insignificant or even positive at the inception of crises. On the modeling side, we explore the structural differences and relative goodness-of-fits of factor specifications, and find that the log-volatility model with two Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factors and double-sided jumps are superior in capturing volatility dynamics and pricing variance swaps.

†Centro de Estudios Monetarios y Financieros. Address: Casado del Alisal 5 Madrid, 28014 Madrid, Spain. E-mail address: amengual@cemfi.es.
‡Booth School of Business, University of Chicago. Address: 5807 S Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago IL 60637, USA. E-mail address: dacheng.xiu@chicagobooth.edu.
1 Introduction

Volatility responds to news. It rises dramatically and immediately following the occurrence of unexpected bad events.\(^1\) Moreover, volatility not only jumps upward but also moves downward rapidly. Sudden declines in volatility are sometimes related to stock market rallies stimulated by unexpected good news from economic indicators or earning announcements. Yet they are also very often triggered by the resolution of policy uncertainty that shifts investors’ sentiment. Recent news headlines bring this indisputable fact into the spotlight. In particular, as can be seen from Figure 1, the VIX dropped 35% on May 10, 2010, as a result of Europe’s emergency loan plan; another 27% on Aug 9, 2011, due to Federal Reserve’s rate statement on keeping interest rates at a record low through mid-2013; and finally 23% on Dec 31, 2012, in anticipation of lawmakers making a deal to avert the “fiscal cliff.”

While the uncertainty of future fiscal and monetary policies may increase the volatility of asset prices, the government and Federal Reserve often intervene in the midst of hard times, which effectively provides a put protection on asset prices.\(^2\) Our hypothesis is that many downward volatility jumps are ex-post market reactions to these policy measures, and that they are important sources of risk for volatility buyers ex-ante. This type of variance risk should be priced in volatility derivatives, and could be an important part of the total variance risk premia. Many previous studies have reported a negative price of volatility jump risk. Ignoring downward volatility jumps, if they are priced, may lead to an exaggeration of the negative jump risk premia and a biased-interpretation of the price of tail events. The goal of this paper is to provide a systematic investigation of where downward volatility jumps originate, how they affect asset prices, and whether they are priced risk factors.

These questions invite us to search for appropriate derivatives to investigate the asset pricing implications of volatility shocks. While the S&P 500 options offer a developed battlefield for volatility trading, volatility derivatives have thrived on the demand for volatility hedging and speculation since their inception. The over-the-counter index variance swap contract is one particular example of these popular derivatives. As with most swaps, the fixed leg of variance swaps pays a pre-determined amount at maturity in exchange for the realized variance that the floating leg commits to offer. Despite the path-dependence of realized variance, the payoff structure of variance swaps is

\(^1\)For instance, the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 sent the VIX near what had been its historical high.

\(^2\)We use “put protection” to refer to the monetary policy approaches that Alan Greenspan and Ben Bernanke, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, exercised from 1987 to 2000 and during recent financial crisis.
appealing for studying the term structure of variance and variance risk premia, as opposed to the
exchange-traded VIX derivatives, in that variance swaps directly reflect investors’ expectation on
future volatility.\textsuperscript{3} Moreover, a variance swap can be replicated using a portfolio of S&P 500 options,
which is very similar to the VIX itself. Therefore it is very sensitive to volatility jumps.

Despite their existence, whether and how these volatility jumps are priced by investors remains
largely unknown, particularly in the case of the large downward jumps. This is partially due to the
absence of derivative pricing models that allow for downward volatility jumps in the mainstream
finance literature. Popular affine models such as the square-root volatility models can only incorpo-
rate upward jumps in order to ensure the positivity of variance. We incorporate downward volatility
jumps and other potentially negative latent factors into a non-affine framework that guarantees the
positivity of variance.

With this new and general non-affine framework, we price variance swaps in a closed form, and
identify downward volatility jumps along with two latent volatility factors from 17 years of variance
swap data and S&P 500 returns. We find that volatility jumps are often triggered by unexpected
macro announcements.\textsuperscript{4} In particular, sudden declines in volatility are mostly associated with the
resolution of policy uncertainty, such as monetary policy changes that are explicit or implicit from
Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) statements or the speeches of the Federal Reserve’s chair-
man, as well as fiscal policy decisions and compromises made by Congress. Our analysis conforms
with the existing model-free estimates in Table 1 that the total variance risk premia are negative most
of the time, yet they tend to be insignificant or even positive at the inception of crises. This finding
is a puzzle as it is in conflict with a representative agent model widely adopted in the literature. In
addition we find that downward volatility jumps are priced with a positive price of risk, providing
evidence for the compensation for variance risk from the “Greenspan Put” or “Bernanke Put.” Our
regression analysis shows that latent volatility factors can be explained not only by excess market
returns, but also by liquidity and credit factors, as well as policy news. In particular, policy news is
important for the short-term factor, whereas the default risk is paramount for the long-term. More
importantly, we also find that most downward volatility jumps affect the short-term factor, and that
the impact of policy measures on long-term uncertainty is not always significant. Among several
alternative specifications, we find that the log-volatility model with two Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factors
and double exponential jumps yields the best in-sample fit and out-of-sample performance.

There is a growing amount of theoretical and empirical work relating political uncertainty to
\textsuperscript{3}Since 2004 and 2006, the Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE) has introduced VIX futures and VIX options,
respectively, offering investors additional instruments for volatility trading. However, these contracts are written on
the VIX, which is very similar to a 1-month variance swap, hence they are more complicated than variance swaps.
\textsuperscript{4}While many macro announcements are pre-scheduled, their impact remains unexpected. As a result, the literature
resorts to Poisson processes for modeling jumps, with notable distinctions by Maheu and McCurdy (2004), Piazzesi
(2005), Dubinsky and Johannes (2006), and Beber and Brandt (2009).
asset pricing. In particular, Pástor and Veronesi (2013) relate the stock market risk premia, volatility, and correlation to the policy uncertainty index constructed by Baker et al. (2013) which is based on the frequency of newspaper references to economic policy uncertainty and other indicators. The regression results of Pástor and Veronesi (2013) agree with all the predictions of their learning model, see also Pástor and Veronesi (2012) for another related model of government policy choice. Boutchkova et al. (2012) investigate how local and global political risks affect industry return volatility. Kelly et al. (2012) find evidence for government guarantee premia by examining the basket-index spread from out-of-the-money put options. Bernanke and Kuttner (2005) study stock market reactions to Federal Reserve policy and find that the effects of unanticipated monetary policy actions on expected excess returns account for the largest part of the responses of stock prices. Recently, Lucca and Moench (2013) document large U.S. equity premia in anticipation of FOMC meetings, and discuss the challenges of explaining such premia with standard asset pricing theory. They also document an increase of intraday realized volatility shortly after the press releases that occur around 2:15 pm EST. Bekaert et al. (2013) decompose the VIX into a risk aversion component and an uncertainty component, using a structural vector autoregressive framework, and find that a lax monetary policy decreases both components. Beber and Brandt (2009) investigate the link between ex-ante macroeconomic uncertainty and ex-post uncertainty resolution in financial markets, using the prices of some options whose underlying is the release of non-farm payroll. They find that higher ex-ante uncertainty leads to a larger reduction in volatility along with a greater increase in trading activity after the news release. While these studies have shed light on the link between political uncertainty and risk in equity markets, we further point out that sudden decreases in volatility are particularly related to the resolution of monetary policy uncertainty, and provide evidence showing that some portion of the variance risk premia is associated with investors’ anticipation of the Federal Reserve’s action.

Our empirical findings on volatility jumps are also relevant to the large literature that investigates the unique role of jumps in asset pricing, which dates back as early as Merton (1976), who introduces jumps to model index returns. Since the seminal work by Duffie et al. (2000), positive volatility jumps, exponentially distributed, have been constantly added to model index volatility dynamics, so that volatility can jump upward but revert back to the mean slowly. Eraker et al. (2003), in particular, point out the unique role played by such volatility jumps and compare them to the role of jumps in returns. However, models in the literature that discusses the existence and necessity of downward volatility jumps are rare. An exception is Todorov and Tauchen (2011), who investigate the activity of volatility jumps using high-frequency historical returns of the VIX. In contrast, we focus on the asset pricing implications of volatility jumps and their price of risk. Recently, Chernov et al. (2012) have discussed the impact of jumps on exchange rates and the impact of positive jumps on their variances, and they relate these to macroeconomic and political news. They find few positive jumps
in variance that respond to such news. We also find positive jumps less responsive to such news, unlike negative jumps.

Previous work in the literature on variance swaps is mostly based on fully specified parametric models using both variance swaps and index values. Egloff et al. (2010) and Amengual (2008) find that single-factor volatility models are incapable of fitting the term structure of variance swap rates. They therefore suggest applying models with two-volatility factors to investigate the term structure of variance. None of their models have volatility jumps. Ait-Sahalia et al. (2014b) propose a similar affine model with positive volatility jumps to estimate the liquidity and variance risk premia. They focus on the component of variance risk premia due to price jumps. Fusari and Gonzalez-Perez (2012) consider a log-affine model with two Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factors but without volatility jumps, in addition to an affine model. Carr et al. (2012) focus on the pricing and hedging of variance swaps and volatility derivatives in general, using time-changed Lévy processes. Filipovic et al. (2013) independently propose a class of quadratic models without volatility jumps. All the aforementioned continuous-time models are nested within our framework. While these two-factor volatility models without volatility jumps have been shown to yield accurate variance swap prices, our empirical results suggest that their dynamics under the objective measure are likely misspecified, which in turn may lead to an overestimate of total variance risk premia.

To study variance risk premia, many papers adopt alternative nonparametric techniques. Among others, Bakshi and Kapadia (2003) estimate variance risk premia using delta-hedged gains of S&P 500 options, whereas Carr and Wu (2009) study variance risk premia using synthetic variance swaps for individual firms and indexes. The synthetic variance swap price thereafter becomes a popular proxy of the risk-neutral conditional variance. To measure the conditional variance under the objective measure, Bollerslev et al. (2011) suggest the use of high-frequency five-minute-based realized volatilities, see also Zhou (2009). Although realized volatilities are model-free estimates, estimating the objective conditional expectation requires a parametric forecasting model. Bekaert and Hoerova (2014) evaluate a plethora of state-of-the-art forecasting models to produce an accurate measure of the conditional variance, and point out that a non-linear model may be better equipped to capture the behavior of conditional variance and variance risk premia in severe crises. We specify and estimate non-affine dynamic models for the index return and its volatility, hence are able to addresses their conjecture. Moreover, using a full-fledged and unified model facilitates the joint statistical inference on conditional variances under both measures. It is worth mentioning that unlike these papers, our focus mainly lies on the economic interpretation and pricing implications of downward volatility jumps, which require a more structural approach. The proposed models can be used for other purposes, such as pricing options and other volatility derivatives.

5Recently, Dew-Becker et al. (2014) propose to investigate structural economic models using variance swaps. Their affine models are cast in discrete-time and only positive volatility jumps are allowed.
Our paper is also related to the specification of models that can capture index volatility dynamics, one of the central themes of empirical option pricing and financial econometrics. This strand of literature investigates the volatility dynamics through the lens of S&P 500 options, see e.g. Bakshi et al. (1997), Bates (2000), Pan (2002), Eraker (2004), and Broadie et al. (2007) for examples of affine jump diffusion models with stochastic volatility driven by one square-root factor. Recent findings by Christoffersen et al. (2009) and Bates (2012) also suggest that models with two square-root factors are essential for capturing the term structure of variance. Nevertheless, financial econometricians are in support of log-volatility models, potentially with jumps or even comprised purely of jumps, which fit the objective dynamics of volatility much better, see e.g. Barndorff-Nielsen and Shephard (2001), Chernov et al. (2003), and Todorov and Tauchen (2011). Indeed, log-volatility models naturally allow downward volatility jumps since they always guarantee the positivity of variance. Plus, log-volatility models allow Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factors, which are not restricted by a similar Feller’s condition for square-root processes, which is often binding for risk neutral dynamics empirically. Therefore, log-volatility models allow highly persistent volatility factors. The drawback of these log-volatility models lies in their lack of tractability for option pricing. We derive closed-form pricing formulae for variance swaps, using which we can investigate the pricing implications of log-volatility models. There are a couple of papers in the empirical asset pricing literature which investigate non-affine risk neutral dynamic models, e.g. Christoffersen et al. (2006) and Durham (2013). They have to resort to simulation methods when pricing S&P 500 options. However, conducting statistical inference on top of simulated prices is computationally intensive.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents our framework for variance swap modeling and pricing. Section 3 discusses the statistical inference, followed by empirical results in Section 4. Section 5 concludes the paper. The Appendix provides all the technical details.

2 Variance Swap Valuation

A variance swap contract is an over-the-counter derivative in which the contract holder pays at maturity $t + \tau$ a fixed amount (variance swap rate) for the realized variance:

$$\frac{1}{\tau} \sum_{i=1}^{[\tau/\Delta]} \left( Y_{t+i\Delta} - Y_{t+(i-1)\Delta} \right)^2,$$

where $Y$ is the log-price of the underlying index, i.e. S&P 500 index. By entering long positions in such contracts, investors can hedge against high realized variance. Thus, the differences between the expectation of variance and the swap price, i.e., the variance risk premia investors earn, are typically negative, see e.g. Bollerslev et al. (2009) and Drechsler (2013).

Variance swap trading has grown rapidly since the aftermath of the LTCM turmoil in late 1990s. For investors using medium- or low-frequency trading strategies, these over-the-counter contracts
are more favorable than S&P 500 options for the purpose of volatility trading, since investors can express their views on volatility without having to do labor-intensive delta hedging.

### 2.1 Risk Neutral Dynamics and Pricing

As is well known, realized variance converges (in probability) to the quadratic variation of \( Y \), i.e. \([Y,Y]_{t,t+\tau}\), and modeling the quadratic variation is a common practice that facilitates the variance swap pricing.\(^6\) Since there is no money changing hands at the initiation of the trade, i.e. time \( t \), the variance swap rate, under some risk neutral measure \( Q \), is given by:

\[
P(t,\tau) = 100 \times \frac{1}{\tau} \mathbb{E}_t^Q \left\{ [Y,Y]_{t,t+\tau} \right\} = 100 \times \frac{1}{\tau} \mathbb{E}_t^Q \left\{ \int_t^{t+\tau} \sigma_s^2 ds + \int_t^{t+\tau} \int_{\mathbb{R}} j^2 \nu_s^Q(dj) ds \right\}.
\]

where \( \nu_s^Q(dj) \) denotes the compensator of jumps in log prices under the risk neutral measure \( Q \). The risk neutral dynamics of the log price is specified as usual,

\[
dY_t = \mu_t^Q dt + \sigma_t dB_t^Q + dJ_t^Q,
\]

where \( B_t^Q \) is Brownian Motion, \( J_t^Q \) is some compensated jump process to be specified, and \( \mu_t^Q \) is the drift determined by the no-arbitrage condition. See more details in Appendix B.4.

We model the unobserved volatility as certain non-affine function of factors:

\[
\sigma_t^2 = \Pi_0 + \Pi_1^\top X + X^\top \Pi_2 X + \exp\left\{ \Pi_3 + \Pi_4^\top X \right\},
\]

where \( \Pi_0 - \frac{1}{\tau} (\Pi_1)^\top (\Pi_2)^{-1} \Pi_1 \geq 0 \), which warrants a positive variance. This model augments the exponentially affine specification by a quadratic component, which also nests the common affine cases when \( X \) only takes positive values.

To ensure the tractability of this general non-affine class of models, we assume that the underlying \( N \)-dimensional factor \( X_t \) follows a multivariate affine process, similar to the affine term structure models discussed in Dai and Singleton (2000), but allowing for jumps, e.g. in Duffie et al. (2000), Li and Song (2013), and Chen and Joslin (2012). Following their notations, the risk neutral model of \( X_t \) is written as:

\[
dX_t = (\Lambda^Q + K^Q X_t) dt + \Sigma \sqrt{S_t} dW_t^Q + dZ_t^Q,
\]

where \( W_t^Q \) is an \( N \)-dimensional standard Brownian motion, and \( S_t \) is a diagonal matrix in \( \mathbb{R}^{N \times N} \) with \( [S_t]_{i,i} = \alpha_i + \beta_i^\top X_t \), and \( Z_t^Q \) is another compensated jump process. While there is no need to introduce correlations among \( W_t^Q \) because of \( \Sigma \), we impose a correlation between \( B_t^Q \) and each element of \( W_t^Q \) to incorporate the so-called “leverage effect.”

\(^6\) Practitioners price variance swaps using a replication portfolio of options, which relies on the same quadratic variation approximation, see e.g. Bossu et al. (2005), hence the approximation error can be ignored.
While the factor $X$ is restricted within the affine class, the volatility dynamics is non-affine, which leads to several differences compared with the usual term structure models. For example, even when $X$ is a homoscedastic Gaussian factor, $\sigma^2_t$ is heteroscedastic and non-Gaussian, as is obvious from Itô’s lemma. Moreover, the volatility of volatility is another (non-affine) function of $X$.$^7$

To specify jumps in both $Y$ and $X$, there are trade-offs that must be considered. First, Poisson type jumps are our preferred choice for modeling daily data, as Lévy type jumps are difficult to identify and disentangle from Brownian shocks generated by stochastic volatility at a daily frequency.$^8$ Second, if the intensities of Poisson jumps are different for $Y$ and $X$, then there would be no co-jumps of $Y$ and $X$ almost surely, which conflicts with the data, see e.g. Jacod and Todorov (2010). Third, there are many pre-scheduled macro announcements, FOMC meetings, and speeches by the Federal Reserve Chairman, which potentially cause jumps on the market. Hence it may be reasonable to model jumps with deterministic timing, see e.g. Piazzesi (2005), Maheu and McCurdy (2004), Dubinsky and Johannes (2006), and Beber and Brandt (2009). However, there are many days in our sample with at least one such event, and jumps are not always present. From our empirical analysis below, whether a jump occurs or not depends on the extent of a news surprise, i.e. the content of the announcements, rather than its schedule. Most of these events do not lead to jumps. Moreover, from the perspective of risk premia estimation, the major difference between deterministic timing and the random arrival of jumps lies in the risk premia associated with the intensity of the jumps. Hence, for the sake of parsimony, we conform with the common practice in the literature and model jumps in $Y$ and $X$ as compound Poisson processes driven by the same intensity, with no price of risk associated with the jump intensity. Therefore, we write

$$\left( J^Q_t, Z^Q_t \right) = \int_0^t \int \int \mathbb{R}^N (j, z) \left( \mathbb{N}(ds, dj, dz) - \nu^Q_s(dj, dz)ds \right),$$

where $\mathbb{N}$ is the Poisson random measure, and $\nu^Q_s(dj, dz)$ denotes its compensator. Moreover, we assume that the Poisson jump intensity is given by $l_0 + l_1^T X_t$, where $l_0 \in \mathbb{R}_+$ and $l_1 \in \mathbb{R}_+^N$. $l_1$ only has non-zero and positive loadings on positive factors in $X$.

Under this framework, the variance swap rate is given in a closed form by:

$$P(t, \tau, X_t) = \frac{100}{\tau} \left\{ \int_t^{t+\tau} \Pi^Q_0 + (\Pi^Q_1)^\top \nabla_u \Psi(s, t, u, X_t) \bigg|_{u=0} + \nabla_u^\top \Pi_2 \nabla_u \Psi(s, t, u, X_t) \bigg|_{u=0} ds \right. \right.$$ 

$$\left. + \int_t^{t+\tau} \exp(\Pi_3) \Psi(s, t, \Pi_4, X_t) ds \right\},$$

$^7$The volatility of volatility, $[d\sigma_t^2, d\sigma_t^2]^c/dt$, can be calculated by Itô’s lemma, where $[\cdot, \cdot]^c$ denotes the continuous component of the quadratic variation. Since $\sigma^2_t$ is a non-linear function of $X_t$, $[d\sigma_t^2, d\sigma_t^2]^c/dt$ is a function of $X_t$.

$^8$There is a large literature on jump detection with intraday data, see e.g. Huang and Tauchen (2005), Barndorff-Nielsen and Shephard (2006), Lee and Mykland (2008), Jiang and Oomen (2008), Jacod and Todorov (2009), and Aït-Sahalia and Jacod (2009).
where $\nabla = (\partial/\partial u_1, \ldots, \partial/\partial u_N)^\top$ is a derivative operator, $\Psi(s, t, u, X_t) = \mathbb{E}_t^Q \left[ e^{u^\top X_s} \right]$, $\Pi_0^Q = \Pi_0 + l_0 \int_{\mathbb{R}} j^2 \nu^Q(dj, dz)$, $\Pi_1^Q = \Pi_1 + l_1 \int_{\mathbb{R}} j^2 \nu^Q(dj)$, and $\nu^Q(dj)$ is the marginal distribution of the jump size of $Y$. The derivation is based on the Fourier Transforms of tempered distributions. These details are given in Appendix A. Regarding its implementation, the computational expense is the same as that of any affine model for the purpose of option pricing. The time-consuming part is the numerical integration over solutions of ordinary differential equations, which are necessary to obtain $\Psi$ and its first and second order derivatives in general.\(^9\) That said, the numerical integration is over a finite interval, which converges faster than the integration over the typical infinite domain needed for option pricing.

2.2 Identification and Risk Premia Specification

The identification of affine term structure models has been discussed in Dai and Singleton (2000) in the absence of jumps. We can recycle their notations and canonical forms by imposing similar identifying constraints on the model excluding jumps. Adding jumps afterwards is straightforward. We classify a model as $A_m(N)$, if $N$ is the number of state variables, and $m$ is the number of independent linear combinations of those state variables that appear in the diffusion matrix, i.e., $m = \text{rank}(B)$, where $B = (\beta_1, \ldots, \beta_N)$. The state variables that appear in the diffusion matrix are non-negative. Moreover, the intensity can only load on positive factors, and jumps of the positive factors can only have positive sizes. The extended canonical forms in this case are easy to obtain.\(^10\)

In general, risk premia can be chosen as completely affine, e.g. Dai and Singleton (2000), or essentially affine, e.g. Duffee (2002), or can be defined as the scaled difference between $\mathbb{P}$- and $\mathbb{Q}$-

\(^9\)Note that each derivative of $\Psi$ contributes to one additional differential equation. The pricing routine is written in C++, and is available upon request.

\(^{10}\)For each $m$, we partition $X^\top = (X_{m\times 1}^\top, X_{(N-m)\times 1}^\top)^\top$. The extended canonical representation by Dai and Singleton (2000) takes a special form of equation (3), where for $m > 0$,

$$K^Q = \begin{pmatrix} K_{m\times m}^Q & 0_{m\times (N-m)} \\ K_{(N-m)\times m}^Q & K_{(N-m)\times (N-m)}^Q \end{pmatrix},$$

and $K^Q$ is either the upper or lower triangle for $m = 0$. In addition,

$$\Lambda^Q = \begin{pmatrix} \Lambda_{m\times 1}^Q \\ 0_{(N-m)\times 1} \end{pmatrix}, \quad \Sigma = I_{N\times N}, \quad \alpha = \begin{pmatrix} 0_{m\times 1} \\ 1_{(N-m)\times 1} \end{pmatrix},$$

$$B = \begin{pmatrix} I_{m\times m} & B_{m\times (N-m)} \\ 0_{(N-m)\times m} & 0_{(N-m)\times (N-m)} \end{pmatrix}, \quad l_1 = \begin{pmatrix} l_{1\times m\times 1} \\ 0_{(N-m)\times 1} \end{pmatrix},$$

with restrictions such that for $1 \leq i \neq k \leq m$ and $1 \leq j \leq N$,

$$K_{i,k}^Q \geq 0, \quad \text{Re}(\text{Eigen}(K^Q)) < 0, \quad \Lambda^Q - l_0 \int_{\mathbb{R}} z^2 \nu^Q(dz) \geq \frac{1}{2}, \quad B_{i,j} \geq 0, \quad l_{1\times i} \geq 0, \quad l_{0\times j} \geq 0.$$

Moreover, $\nu^Q(\mathbb{R}_m \times \mathbb{R}^{N-m}) = 0$. For reasons of space, these canonical forms do not allow pure jump factors. Extended canonical forms with pure jump factors are available upon request.
measures. As shown by Cheridito et al. (2007), the last procedure can also ensure lack of arbitrage as long as the existence and boundary non-attainment conditions are satisfied under both measures. They call this extended affine specification.

We follow their suggestion, and specify the objective dynamics for \( X \) as,

\[
dx_t = (\Lambda^P + K^P X_t)dt + \Sigma \sqrt{S_t} dW^P_t + dZ^P_t, \tag{4}
\]

leaving market prices of risk defined as the scaled differences between the drifts under \( P \) and \( Q \).

In Appendix B, we provide three models, \( A_0(2), A_1(2), \) and \( A_2(2) \), with each allowing a two-factor structure, and with two allowing negative volatility jumps. Modeling volatility as a two-factor process is an established approach from the literature. Engle and Rangel (2008) decompose volatility shocks into their short-term and long-term components, and relate the long-term component to business cycles in a comprehensive international setting. Adrian and Rosenberg (2008) also decompose equity volatility into similar components, and in addition relate the short-term component to market skewness risk with a cross-section of equity returns. Corradi et al. (2013) directly model the market volatility as a combination of business cycle factors and one additional latent factor, and find that their macro-factors explain the majority of volatility fluctuations. Christoffersen et al. (2009) also find a two-factor volatility structure necessary to model S&P 500 options.

The \( P \)-dynamics of index returns is given by

\[
dY_t = \mu^P_t dt + \sigma_t dB^P_t + dJ^P_t, \tag{5}
\]

where \( \mu^P_t \) captures the time-varying equity risk-premia contributed by both jumps and stochastic volatility, \( J^P_t \) is some jump process under \( P \) specified in Appendix B.4.\(^{11}\) We do not, however, specify \( \mu^P_t \), as it is poorly estimated from variance swaps or even from options, and the focus of this paper is not equity risk premia. Therefore, in our estimation, we follow Eraker et al. (2003) and Eraker (2004) by treating \( \mu^P_t \) as a constant. We also confirm in simulations below that such misspecification does not have any noticeable impact on the inference of the remaining parameters.

Overall, the total number of parameters equals to 34 for all three models. A full list of parameters is available from the first columns of Tables 6 and 7.

\(^{11}\)The existence and uniqueness of \( X_t \) follows from Theorem 2.7 in Duffie et al. (2003), which in turn implies the existence and uniqueness of \( \sigma^2_t \) and \( Y_t \), since they can be written explicitly in terms of \( X_t \) or its stochastic integral defined by (1) and (5). To show the existence of an equivalent probability measure \( Q \), which ensures that our specification precludes arbitrage opportunities, we point out that the semimartingales specified as solutions to \( \{(1), (2), (3)\} \) and \( \{(2), (4), (5)\} \) satisfy the assumptions of Corollary 3.68 of Jacod and Shiryaev (2003), since the drifts and the diffusions of \( Y \) and \( X \) are locally Lipchitz, and jumps are locally bounded. The desired absolute continuity follows from Theorem 2.6(a) in Jacod and Shiryaev (2003), provided that the associated Hellinger process is a.s. finite.
3 Likelihood Inference

This section contains details of our econometric inference, which readers may skip without any difficulty in understanding empirical results.

Our estimation strategy relies on observations of the joint time-series of the underlying S&P 500 index and several variance swap rates with different maturities. Our joint modeling strategy allows us to separately pin down risk premia related to each of the different sources of uncertainty. However, as is common in many financial models with jump diffusions, likelihood functions are not available. In addition, our state variables are latent, and sometimes non-Gaussian. Moreover, as discussed in Section 4.1 below, our data panel is unbalanced. Therefore, we resort to the Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) methods, see e.g. Johannes and Polson (2010) for a detailed survey.

We assume that there are observations available on S&P 500 returns and \( k \) different variance swap rates and that observations are recorded at a daily frequency \( \Delta = 1/252 \), and that the total number of time periods under consideration is \( T \). Let \( Y \) denote the \( T \times 1 \) vector of S&P 500 prices, and \( P \) denote the \( T \times k \) panel of variance swap rates.

For convenience, we introduce \( V \) and \( \Theta \) to summarize latent variables and parameters. Typically, \( V \) will contain the latent factors in \( X \) of the model as well as the remaining latent variables such as jump sizes (denoted by \( j_t \) and \( z_t \)) and jump times (denoted by \( n_t \)), even though they do not enter into the pricing formulae. As for \( \Theta \), we split it into \((\Theta_M, \Theta_{\Pi}, \Theta_P, \Theta_E)\). \( \Theta_M = (\Lambda^Q, vec(K^Q), \{\alpha_i, \beta_i\}_{i=1}^m, \theta^Q_Z) \), which contains the parameters determining the dynamics of the latent factors under the risk-neutral measure, with \( \theta^Q_Z \) denoting the parameters governing the jump processes; \( \Theta_{\Pi} = (\Pi_0, vec(\Pi_1), vec(\Pi_2)) \) includes the parameters defining \( \sigma^2_t \); \( \Theta_P = (\Lambda^P, vec(K^P), \rho_1, \rho_2) \) summarizes the remaining \( \mathbb{P} \)-measure parameters; and finally, given that there are more derivatives than sources of uncertainty in the theoretical model we allow pricing errors to avoid stochastic singularity, which are characterized by their variance parameters summarized in \( \Theta_E \). The pricing errors are also economically important in that they capture the remaining factors that are not captured by our pricing model, such as illiquidity factor or counterparty risk. Specifically, we assume additive pricing errors \( \varepsilon^j_i \) associated with time \( i \) for variance swap with maturity \( j \), so that the observed price satisfies

\[
P_i^j = P(t, \tau_j, X_i; \Theta_M, \Theta_{\Pi}) + \varepsilon^j_i,
\]

with \( \varepsilon^j_i \sim N(0, s^2_j) \) and \( \varepsilon^j_i \) is independent of \( \varepsilon^h_i \) for \( h \neq j \) and across time. \( s^2_j \)'s are stacked in \( \Theta_E \). Notice that all prices except the S&P 500 index are assumed to be observed with error in our framework and there is no need to assume that certain combinations of variance swap prices are perfectly observed.

The purpose of MCMC sampling is to obtain a sample of parameters in \( \Theta \) and latent variables in \( V \) from their joint posterior density. Specifically, for a given model \( M \), the posterior distribution
is given by
\[ p(V, \Theta | Y, P, M) \propto \mathcal{L}(Y, P | V, \Theta, M) \cdot \mathcal{H}(V | \Theta, M) \cdot p(\Theta | M) \] (6)
where \( \mathcal{L}(Y, P | V, \Theta, M) \) denotes the likelihood function, \( \mathcal{H}(V | \Theta, M) \) is the density for the latent variables and \( p(\Theta | M) \) is the prior density over the parameter vector \( \Theta \).

We use a Gibbs sampling procedure to estimate these models. In essence, this amounts to reducing a complex problem, i.e. sampling from the joint posterior distribution, into a sequence of tractable ones, i.e. sampling from conditional distributions for a subset of the parameters conditional on all the other parameters, for which the literature already provides a solution. The Gibbs sampling procedure involves sampling sequentially from several blocks:

- **Latent factors**: \( p(X^{(g)}_t | X^{(g)}_{t-1}, \Theta^{(g)}_{t-1}, j^{(g)}_{t-1}, z^{(g)}_{t-1}, n^{(g)}_{t-1}, \Theta^{(g-1)}, Y, P) \)
- **\( \mathcal{Q} \)-measure parameters**: \( p(\Theta^{(g)}_M | V^{(g-1)}, \Theta^{(g-1)}, Y, P) \)
- **Pricing equation parameters**: \( p(\Theta^{(g)}_{\Pi} | X^{(g-1)}, \Theta^{(g-1)}, P) \)
- **\( \mathcal{P} \) measure parameters**: \( p(\Theta^{(g)}_P | V^{(g-1)}, \Theta^{(g-1)}_M, Y) \)
- **Pricing error variances**: \( p(\Theta^{(g)}_E | X^{(g-1)}, \Theta^{(g-1)}_M, \Theta^{(g-1)}_{\Pi}, P) \)
- **Jump processes**: \( p(j^{(g)}, z^{(g)}, n^{(g)} | V^{(g-1)}, \Theta^{(g-1)}_P, Y) \)

The supplemental Appendix C contains a detailed description of how we sample the relevant quantities for each of the sampling blocks.

In Table 2 we summarize the priors we use by reporting the type of distribution, mean, standard deviation and 95% highest density region for the different elements of \( \Theta \). Simulation results for Models \( A_0 (2) \), \( A_1 (2) \) and \( A_2 (2) \) are provided in Tables 3 and 4.

Finally, we describe how to evaluate the relative performance of the competing models. The marginal likelihood of model \( M \), \( p(Y, P | M) \), is a measure of how well model \( M \) predicts the data \( Y, P \), which is relevant for model comparison. Given the large sample size of our data, we resort to the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), ignoring parameters’ uncertainty by keeping them fixed to their posterior mean \( \hat{\Theta} \). To obtain the BIC, we compute the likelihood function \( \mathcal{L}(Y, P | \hat{\Theta}, M) \) after integrating out latent variables with additional draws of \( V \) for a given \( \hat{\Theta} \).

When working with models whose posterior distribution is very complicated in shape, it is important to begin with at least an approximate estimate of the peak of the posterior density. To do so, and because the number of parameters is quite large for our models, we use an eclectic approach combining Metropolis within Gibbs steps for latent variables with optimization routines for the structural parameters in a preliminary run of the chain. Then, the full Metropolis Sampling within Gibbs sampler described above can be used to draw from the posterior distribution. The empirical results shown later are based on 1,000,000 draws. The first 200,000 draws are disregarded as burn-in and of the remaining 800,000, one every 80 draws is retained. We also run 4 additional chains for each model to check the convergence of the estimation.
4 Empirical Results

4.1 Data

We estimate models $A_0(2)$, $A_1(2)$, and $A_2(2)$ using daily S&P 500 index returns and variance swap rates with six different maturities (2, 3, 6, 9, 12, and 24 months) over the period from January 4, 1996 to January 11, 2013. The number of daily observations is 4,276, excluding weekends and holidays. Due to restrictions from our data source, the sample is constructed as follows: it contains data on variance swap mid-quotes on 5 maturities (2, 3, 6, 12 and 24 months) from an anonymous U.S. bank over the period January 4, 1996 to March 30, 2007, whereas the the second dataset, which belongs to the same source, covers the period starting from January 2, 2001 to January 11, 2013 with 4 maturities (3, 6, 9, and 12 months). Overall, we have an unbalanced panel of variance swaps over the past 17 years.\(^\text{12}\)

Figure 2 presents the variance swap rates for different maturities along with S&P 500 index returns over the whole sampling period. It is worth mentioning that, during the first half of the sample, they are characterized by a significantly higher market volatility which is due in part to the Asian, Russian and LTCM crises. After the “quiet” period between the years 2004 and 2007, during which the market witnessed a persistently low volatility level and an increasing trend of stock prices, there is a sharp elevation in volatility due to the 2007-08 financial meltdown, followed by two spikes related to the European sovereign debt crisis and the U.S. debt-ceiling confrontation.

The bottom panel of Figure 2 highlights the changes in the slope of the variance term structure. For most of the sample, the variance term structure is upward sloping, whereas in the middle and aftermath of crises, the term structure switches to a downward sloping shape, suggesting that volatility is expected to decrease towards its long-term mean level. The fact that the term structure is not in perfect tandem with the variance level suggests the necessity of incorporating at least one additional factor that captures the slope of the term structure of variance.

We perform principal component analysis for the balanced panel with 1558 observations. The first three eigenvalues account for 97.80%, 99.69%, and 99.91% of the total variations. The corresponding eigenvectors suggest that the first principal component is related to level shifts in the variance curve while the second one captures changes in the slope of the curve. Nevertheless, the convexity effect seems negligible for variance swap data, as the contribution of its corresponding principal component is tiny.

To understand what may drive the latent volatility factors, we conduct a regression analysis using factors of economic fundamentals. We select two credit variables, including the daily TED spread,\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{12}\)While it is a pity that we do not have data on 1-month variance swaps, which may help identify jumps from stochastic volatility, and which are informative about risk premia, we use the squared-VIX in out-of-sample studies and find very small pricing errors.
calculated as the difference between the three-month LIBOR and the three-month T-Bill interest rate and the default spread (DEF), calculated as the difference between the monthly Moody’s AAA and BAA corporate bond yield. We also obtain two monthly macroeconomic factors from the Federal Reserve’s website: the Chicago Fed National Activity Index (CFI), constructed from 85 monthly indicators of economic activity; and industrial production growth (IPG), as suggested by Pástor and Veronesi (2013) and Adrian and Rosenberg (2008). We also include the daily term spread (TERM), i.e. the difference between the yields on the 10-year and 3-month Treasury securities. We also add one monthly liquidity factor (LIQ), the innovation of the aggregate liquidity from Pástor and Stambaugh (2003). To identify potential policy risk that may be related to volatility jumps, we add the policy news index (POL) constructed by Baker et al. (2013). Finally, we construct the market skewness factor as it is shown to be important for the short-term component by Adrian and Rosenberg (2008).

To explain volatility jumps, we construct measures of news surprises based on surveys of economists’ expectations on 18 economic indicators from Bloomberg. The detailed information about the categories, the announcement time, and the frequency of these news events are given in Table 5. We proxy news surprise as the differences between the actual news release and the survey expectations:13

\[
\text{News Surprise} = \text{Announced Quantity}_t - \text{Median of Expectations}_t.
\] (7)

The news surprises of economic indicators are treated as the control variables since they are expected to produce jumps in S&P 500 returns and other markets, e.g. Beechey and Wright (2009) and Faust and Wright (2009). To proxy the resolution of policy uncertainty, we use the schedules of FOMC and ECB meetings, as well as the speech schedules of the Federal Reserve’s Chairman. Although the schedules are usually pre-announced and the target interest rates do not change often, the minutes, statements or press conferences after the FOMC meetings are informative about monetary policy decisions, and this information could be totally unpredictable.

In the next section, we document a few empirical facts that surface from our analysis.

4.2 Model Performance

4.2.1 Choice of Models

While our principal component analysis suggests that one factor can explain a good deal of variation in variance swap prices, Aït-Sahalia et al. (2014a) find strong support for two-factor compared to one-factor models through a more formal comparison based on a model selection criterion using the likelihood ratio for non-nested models. Moreover, the variation in the term structure also suggests at least two factors: one for the short-end of the curve and the other one for the long-end or, intuitively, the slope. For those reasons, in what follows we focus our analysis on alternative models that include

13Our dataset does not contain standard errors of the survey estimates. It can be expected that the regression results would become more significant if standard errors were used to scale the differences.
two volatility factors. In light of the evidence of negative jumps highlighted in Figure 1, we estimate models $A_0(2)$ and $A_1(2)$, each of which allows for negative jumps through at least one Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factor, as well as model $A_2(2)$ for comparison, which nests several models widely used in the recent literature, despite its inadequacy of capturing negative volatility jumps.

### 4.2.2 Estimation Results

In Tables 6 and 7, we report the posterior means and standard deviations of the parameter vectors $\Theta_M$, $\Theta_\Pi$, $\Theta_P$, and $\Theta_E$ for $A_0(2)$, $A_1(2)$, and $A_2(2)$ models. Parameters are defined in annual terms following the convention in the empirical option pricing literature.

We first discuss the estimates of $\Theta_M$ and $\Theta_P$. As can be seen from the $\kappa_Q$’s estimates, the first factor $X_1$ mean-reverts much faster than the second factor $X_2$ does. $\kappa_{11}$ is closer to the values found in the option pricing literature under the pricing measure. Also, the mean reversion parameter of $X_2$ under both measures is very low, around 0.2 for both $A_0(2)$ and $A_1(2)$, implying that shocks to $X_2$ have a half life of several years. Moreover, for both $A_0(2)$ and $A_1(2)$ models, positive jump sizes are larger under $Q$ than under $P$, while negative jump sizes are smaller in magnitude under $Q$. This indicates that both types of jumps are priced, and that negative jumps have positive risk premia. The lower panel of Table 6 contains the corresponding summary statistics of the posterior distribution of the pricing equation parameters in $\Theta_\Pi$. Not surprisingly, these parameters are estimated with high precision given that they are identified from prices. Moreover, the percentage of volatility explained by the exponential component dominates, accounting for on average over 90% across all models. This provides strong evidence in favor of log-type volatility models against the affine volatility models typically used in the literature.

Figure 3 provides the time series of the estimated factors for the three models. Interestingly, the extracted factors share similar patterns across models. Although the levels of these factors are not the same due to the sign restrictions, the similarity suggests that the extracted factors are very robust.

### 4.2.3 Assessment of the $Q$-Measure Dynamics

We then analyze the properties of pricing error variances $\Theta_E$, from which we can intuitively learn about the performance of different models. Ideally, better models tend to produce smaller pricing errors, given similar amounts of unknown parameters. It turns out that we find very similar performances across the three models. The estimated standard deviations of pricing errors are around 0.37, 0.07, 0.21, 0.25, 0.06, and 0.23 for the 6 maturities, respectively, despite $A_0(2)$ and $A_1(2)$ being slightly better.

From the above discussion, it seems difficult to determine which model performs better, as their $Q$-measure fittings all look good in sample. We then compare their out-of-sample performance of
model-fitting using the VIX. The out-of-sample study here is cross-sectional, instead of based on
time-series forecasting, as is common for models with latent factors, see e.g. Piazzesi (2010). The
VIX is constructed by the CBOE using option portfolios, which often coincide with how variance
swap contract writers hedge their risk exposure. As a result, it is expected that the time-series of
the squared VIX (scaled by 100) and the model-predicted 1-month swap rates present very similar
patterns, although as Aït-Sahalia et al. (2012) point out, the difference between the squared VIX and
variance swap rates is related to the higher order moments of price jumps. The results are shown
in Figure 4. Indeed, the out-of-sample performance compared to the VIX is almost identical across
these models, with correlations as high as 0.89 for all.

4.2.4 Assessment of the \( \mathbb{P} \)-Measure Dynamics

Having witnessed quite similar results across the \( \mathbb{Q} \)-measure performance of these models, we then
move on to their \( \mathbb{P} \)-measure performance by investigating the time series of the estimated spot
variance \( \sigma^2_t \), which can be decomposed into jumps and Brownian shocks. We decompose changes of
estimated spot variances for all three models in Figure 5, respectively, which sheds light on some
new evidence on model selection among two-factor volatility models.

The changes of the variance appear very similar to changes of the squared VIX in Figure 1, but the
decomposition is strikingly different. Perhaps not surprisingly, the \( A_2(2) \) model cannot capture any of
these downward volatility jumps, so that they are misidentified as large Brownian shocks. Although
the \( A_1(2) \) model is able to capture negative jumps in one of its factors, the Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factor,
this factor turns out to be slow mean-reverting and highly persistent, which cannot accommodate
those jumps that perhaps only affect short-term volatility levels. As a result, several significantly
downward volatility changes are attributed to Brownian shocks, as the square-root factor does not
permit negative jumps. The fact that the Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factor is selected by the data to be
more persistent than the square-root factor is not surprising, as the Feller condition prevents the
mean-reversion speed from being smaller than a certain threshold, which would be binding if the
square-root factor was selected to be the long-term one. Indeed, for the \( A_2(2) \) model, the Feller
constraint is binding for the \( \mathbb{Q} \)-measure dynamics. In contrast, the \( A_0(2) \) model can accommodate
jumps in both the short-term and long-term factors, so that those short-term jumps missed by \( A_1(2) \)
are captured.

Finally, to evaluate the relative performance of the competing models more formally, we compute
the marginal likelihood of model \( A_i(2) \) for \( i = 0, 1, \) and \( 2, \) \( p(Y,P|A_i(2)) \), as well as their Bayesian
Information Criterion (BIC)s, which confirm that \( A_2(2) \) is not as preferable compared to either \( A_0(2) \)
or \( A_1(2) \), despite these criteria not being able to successfully distinguish the latter two models apart.

Overall, while the \( A_2(2) \) model is more popular than \( A_0(2) \) and \( A_1(2) \) in the literature, we provide
evidence that advocates the latter ones, or in particular \( A_0(2) \), as the other two models cannot fully
accommodate downward volatility jumps, especially those that only affect the short-term volatility component. In addition, the Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factor seems to be a better choice than the square-root factor when it comes to modeling persistent processes. We hence employ the $A_0(2)$ model in the following empirical analysis, with some results on $A_1(2)$ and $A_2(2)$ reported for comparison and robustness check.

4.3 Economic Interpretation of Volatility Components

4.3.1 Volatility Factors

We now explain what the latent volatility factors are, before addressing how jumps are related to them. We conduct a regression analysis trying to link the identified latent factors with known economic risk factors. We consider one-by-one simple regressions of each factor $X_i$ of $A_0(2)$, sampled at the end of each month from 1996 - 2012, on the innovation of each covariate given by Section 4.1, as well as the lagged value of $X_i$:

$$X_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Z_{j,t} + \beta_2 X_{i,t-1} + \varepsilon_t,$$

(8)

with $Z_{j,t}$ being the innovation of the $j$th covariate. For POL and TERM, we use ARIMA(1,1,0) innovations, as the Dickey Fuller tests fail to reject the unit-roots in our sample period. For IPG, we use the AR(3) innovation, following Adrian and Rosenberg (2008). For the rest of the covariates, we use AR(1) innovations. The results are identical when using other regression specifications.

We also consider a multiple time-series regression for all the innovations of the covariates plus the lagged $X_i$:

$$X_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 DEF_t + \beta_2 TED_t + \beta_3 TERM_t + \beta_4 LIQ_t + \beta_5 POL_t +$$
$$+ \beta_6 SKEW_t + \beta_7 ExM_t + \beta_8 IPG_t + \beta_9 CFI_t + \beta_{10} X_{i,t-1} + \varepsilon_t.$$

(9)

Tables 8 and 9 provide regression results for $X_1$ and $X_2$, respectively. It is suggested by Table 8 that the time variation of short-term volatility factor $X_1$ can be explained by credit risk, liquidity risk, and policy news, in addition to the excess returns. The signs of each coefficient agree with the intuition that short-term volatility rises if risk or uncertainty increases. When stacking these covariates into the multiple regression, policy news, excess market returns, and the lagged values of $X_1$ subsume the rest of the covariates. As for the second volatility factor $X_2$, the default risk, term premia, and excess market return become significant with all covariates included. The AR(1) coefficient reported in Table 9 confirms that $X_2$ is much more persistent than $X_1$. It is worth mentioning that our business cycle variables are not significant, for potentially two reasons. First, the sample period is as short as 17 years, which does not accommodate many business cycles. Secondly, the longest maturity of our variance swaps is 2 years, so that the “long” term factor extracted here
may be regarded as the “median” term in macroeconomics, so that business cycle variables are less important. The results are the same for $A_1(2)$ and $A_2(2)$, which can be implied from Figure 3.

### 4.3.2 Volatility Jumps

Regarding volatility jumps, we find that downward volatility jumps are as common as positive ones, and that they are often associated with a resolution of policy uncertainty. Apart from the three news headlines mentioned in the introduction, we highlight 29 additional days in Table 10, which are clearly related to some policy news, out of the 40 days with largest downward volatility jumps. From this table, we find that the majority of large downward volatility jumps are caused by changes of current monetary policy or clear indications about future monetary policy, despite few jumps being relevant to fiscal policy, all of which may help comfort investors.

To understand how volatility jumps originate, we regress the magnitudes of positive and negative volatility jumps onto the magnitude of macroeconomic news surprises for each volatility factor, respectively:

$$|\text{Positive/Negative jump size of } X_{j,t}| = \beta_{j,0}^{+/-} + \sum_{i=1}^{21} \beta_{j,i}^{+/-} |s_{i,t}| + \varepsilon_{j,t}^{+/-}, \text{ for } j = 1, 2. \quad (10)$$

where coefficients with $+/-$ correspond to regressions with positive and negative jumps respectively, and $s_{i,t}$ is the $i$-th news surprise at time $t$. If there is no such news event on day $t$, then $s_{i,t}$ is set to 0. All news surprises are rescaled so that they all have the time-series standard error which is equal to 1.

In addition, we also run two similar regressions for jumps in $\sigma_t^2$:

$$|\text{Positive/Negative jump size of } \sigma_t^2| = \beta_{0}^{+/-} + \sum_{i=1}^{21} \beta_{i}^{+/-} |s_{i,t}| + \varepsilon_{t}^{+/-}. \quad (11)$$

The results are provided in Table 11. We find that negative volatility jumps in $X_1$ are mainly caused by FOMC meetings and Federal Reserve Chairman’s speeches, whereas other volatility jumps are the result of surprising news about employment, consumer spending, and national output. This conforms with our conjecture and earlier event studies suggesting that negative volatility jumps are highly correlated with the resolution of policy uncertainty. In addition, such jumps mostly affect the short-term volatility level, suggesting that not all policy measures have a significant impact on long-term uncertainty.

To further analyze the short-term versus long-term impact of policy news, we investigate the identified jumps in $X_1$ and $X_2$ separately, based on the $A_0(2)$ model. We take the three events mentioned in the introduction as examples. It turns out that not all of the three policy news we highlighted have a strong long-term impact on volatility, despite their significant influences on the short-term volatility level with magnitudes as high as 0.37, 0.24, and 0.29, respectively. Regarding
Europe’s Debt Crisis, the unprecedented emergency loan plan unveiled on May 10, 2010 hit the long-term volatility level by -0.09, although a larger downward jump of magnitude 0.29 in $X_2$ came two days later, as investors digested the details of the $1 trillion European aid package. Another long-term volatility jump (-0.24) came more than one year later, after European Union leaders agreed to expand Europe’s bailout fund and take major losses on Greek bonds at the end of marathon talks on October 27, 2011. Also, the Federal Reserve’s FOMC statement on August 9, 2011 decreases the long-term uncertainty level by -0.10, partially because of the additional “forward guidance” information on how long the Committee expects to keep the target for the federal funds rate exceptionally low. In contrast, the news about the fiscal cliff does not show a significant impact, as investors remained cautious about the deal. Indeed, Congress failed to reach an agreement on spending cuts and the sequestration was delayed until March 2013 as part of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, passed by Congress on January 1, 2013.

4.4 Variance Risk Premia

4.4.1 Are Downward Volatility Jumps Priced?

Now we investigate the pricing implications of downward volatility jumps. Comparing the estimates in Table 6, positive volatility jumps have larger magnitudes under the $\mathbb{Q}$-measure than under the $\mathbb{P}$-measure, whereas negative jumps have smaller magnitudes under the $\mathbb{Q}$-measure. This indicates that positive volatility jumps have a negative price of risk, whereas negative jumps have a positive price of risk. As a result, the total variance risk premia would be overestimated if downward volatility jumps are excluded.

To gauge the economic importance of the bias, we compare the total variance risk premia implied from $\mathcal{A}_0(2)$ with its counterfactual counterpart that does not include downward volatility jumps. The difference in the amount of variance risk premia can be interpreted as the premia due to downward volatility jumps. We define variance risk premia in the same way as was introduced in Bollerslev et al. (2009), Carr and Wu (2009), and Todorov (2010):

$$VRP(t, \tau) = \frac{1}{\tau} \left\{ \mathbb{E}_t^\mathbb{P} \left( [Y, Y]_{t,t+\tau} \right) - \mathbb{E}_t^\mathbb{Q} \left( [Y, Y]_{t,t+\tau} \right) \right\}.$$  

By enforcing only upward volatility jumps under both measures, i.e. setting mixture probabilities of volatility jumps to 1, we are able to calculate the hypothetical amount of variance risk premia, when downward jumps are ignored. Based on the $\mathcal{A}_0(2)$ model, we find that the variance risk premia are much smaller in magnitude compared to the counterfactual case – on average, the amounts of risk premia are 7.5% less for a 1-month maturity, 10.2% for 2-month, 11.9% for 3-month, 14.8% for 6-month, 16.7% for 9-month, 18.4% for 1-year, and 24.2% for a 2-year maturity. Therefore, ignoring such jumps would lead to an exaggeration of variance risk premia. While a model without downward volatility jumps may be able to capture part of the jump risk premia through other components
in the model (this seems to be the case for $A_0(1)$ but not for $A_2(2)$, as shown from Table 12), the interpretation would be entirely different. Unlike the premia for persistent shocks, jump risk premia are compensation for tail events. In particular, downward volatility jumps are associated with important policy measures, reflecting the protection offered by the Federal Reserve.

### 4.4.2 Are Variance Risk Premia Always Negative?

We next plot in Figure 6 the time series of the term structure of variance risk premia implied from the $A_0(2)$ model. The plots for other models have a similar pattern, so we only report the summary statistics of their estimates in Table 12.

Figure 6 suggests that variance risk premia are mostly negative, with confidence bands not including zero (see Table 12), and countercyclical, i.e. they become even more negative in bad times. For example, the lower troughs in the figure are associated with the 1997-98 Asian crisis, the dot-com bubble, the recent financial meltdown, and the European and U.S. debt crises, suggesting that investors require more compensation for bearing variance risk during difficult times.

However, what we find more interesting and puzzling is that at the inception of crises, the estimates of variance risk premia become positive or at least insignificant from zero for a short period of time. The point estimates are very different from 0, of an even larger magnitude than in normal periods, suggesting strong economic significance. This finding agrees with most model-free estimates, but cannot be obtained by affine parametric models in the literature because their risk premia specification is not sufficiently flexible, see Table 1.\footnote{Bekaert and Hoerova (2014) point out that their best linear forecasting models for the objective conditional variance yield the same puzzling result, and suggest that non-linear models may be the solution. Our result shows that even non-affine models yield the same pattern, which repeats itself in most crises.}

The risk premia should have been more negative, rather than being statistical insignificant or even positive, if the variance risk were priced by the representative agent in a rational expectation framework. To resolve this puzzle, a model in which investors have heterogeneous beliefs could serve as an alternative, so that the variance risk premia could be either positive or negative depending on the prevalent view of the market. Bakshi et al. (2014) find supportive evidence of heterogeneous beliefs from VIX options market, as the pricing kernel of the VIX presents a U-shape pattern. Building such a model to explain this variance risk premia puzzle is left for future work.

### 4.5 Robustness Checks

For robustness, on the first panel of Figure 7 we compare the estimated daily volatility path with realized volatility computed from high frequency data using the square-root of the truncated sum\footnote{It is worth mentioning that model-free estimates still rely on affine volatility forecasting models to estimate the conditional variance under the objective measure.}
of squared 5-minute returns of SPY, the SPDR S&P 500 ETF. A truncation is necessary to get rid of those jumps in returns, see e.g. Aït-Sahalia and Jacod (2014). Regressions of realized volatility onto volatility estimates across three models show that each model produces a decent $R^2$, with $A_0(2)$ having the highest 62.60%, followed by 62.49% from $A_2(2)$, and 62.24% from $A_1(2)$. This exercise validates our estimated factors and $\Theta_{II}$.

In addition, in Table 12 we compare the variance risk premia implied from the $A_1(2)$, and $A_2(2)$ models. The latter two models fail to include downward volatility jumps to an increasing extent – $A_2(2)$ completely rules out all downward volatility jumps, whereas $A_1(2)$ captures certain downward jumps in the long-term volatility component. We report the ranges of the point estimates of variance risk premia to show that all non-affine models under consideration generate some positive variance risk premia, despite these estimates being insignificant at 5% level. In addition, the ranges of variance risk premia also indicate that the $A_2(2)$ model clearly overestimates the variance risk premia, compared to the other two models.

Finally, we also explore whether fluctuations in variance risk premia contain some relevant information about future volatility levels. To do so, and in order to deal with non-overlapping monthly observations, we run simple monthly regressions of the realized profit and loss (P&L) earned by investing in an hypothetical variance swap with 1-month time-to-maturity on our variance risk premia estimates for the models we consider.\footnote{\textsuperscript{15} Even though we acknowledge that our variance risk premia estimates contain some information about future realizations of the data, we emphasize that this is true for all three models we consider so that the comparison across models remains valid; and this forward-looking bias introduced by the smoothing of the estimated factors, in practice, tends to affect factor estimates for a few days, while our regressions are computed at a monthly frequency.} We compute P&L by the VIX\textsuperscript{2} minus the realized variance of the corresponding trading days. To avoid the problem of persistent regressors, we employ an AR(1) regression of the P&L on the AR(1) innovation of the estimated variance risk premia. Interestingly, both models $A_0(2)$ and $A_1(2)$ have an $R^2$ as high as 20\%, higher than the 13\% $R^2$ from $A_2(2)$. We also plot the realized P&L on the bottom panel of Figure 7, which tends to be positive at the inception of crises as well. This may suggest that insurance sellers failed to ask for sufficient amount of premia right before or at the inception of crises, potentially due to a poor judgement of the tail event probability or ineffective risk management.

5 Conclusion

Motivated by recent news headlines about the dramatic changes of the VIX following the announcements of policy makers, our systematic investigation examines the sudden declines of market volatility. We find downward volatility jumps to be as common as positive ones, and that the majority of them are caused by FOMC announcements and the speeches of the Federal Reserve Chairman, showing the impact of Central Bank intervention, whereas only a small portion of downward volatil-
Volatility jumps are responses to surprising news about employment, consumer spending, and national output. This conforms with earlier event studies suggesting that negative volatility jumps are highly correlated with the resolution of policy uncertainty. Moreover, we find that while such jumps affect the short-term volatility level, not all of them have a significant impact on long-term volatility.

Our results indicate that positive volatility jumps have a negative price of risk, whereas negative jumps have a positive price of risk. In other words, the protection offered by the Federal Reserve is indeed priced by investors. As a result, ignoring downward volatility jumps leads to a serious model misspecification, which in turn leads to an exaggeration of the total variance risk premia by a large extent. The total variance risk premia tend to be positive at the inception of crises, which calls for explanations using new economic models.

In order to model downward volatility jumps, this paper introduces a new non-affine modeling framework which extends the classification and characterization of term structure models to allow jumps. Our canonical models nest square-root factors, Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factors, pure-jump factors with state-dependent intensity, self-exciting jumps, Lévy jumps, etc. We find that the log-type volatility model, which has been favored by financial econometricians in the past, with two Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factors and double exponential jumps yields the best performance in fitting variance swaps. Such a model can also be used to investigate S&P 500 options, which we leave for future work.
Appendix

A Variance Swap Pricing

Recall that since $X$ is affine, the generalized conditional characteristic function (GCCF) of $X_s$ is defined below, for any $s \geq t$ with $t$ fixed:

$$\Psi(s, t, u, X_t) = \mathbb{E}_t^Q \left[ e^{u^T X_s} \right],$$

where $u \in \mathbb{C}^N$. There exists a closed-form formula for the GCCF function given by Duffie et al. (2000):

$$\log \left( \Psi(s, t, u, X_t) \right) = A(s - t, u) + B(s - t, u)^\top X_t,$$

where $A$ and $B$ satisfy the following ordinary differential equations (ODEs):

$$\dot{B} = (K^Q)^\top B + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^m [\Sigma^T B]_i^2 \beta_i + l_1 \phi(B),$$

$$\dot{A} = (A^Q)^\top B + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^m [\Sigma^T B]_i^2 \alpha_i + l_0 \phi(B),$$

where $B(t) = u$, $A(t) = 0$, and for any $h \in \mathbb{C}^N$,

$$\phi(h) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (e^{h^\top z} - 1 - h^\top z) \tilde{\nu}^Q(dz).$$

Under our risk neutral specification, we have

$$\mathbb{E}_t^Q \left\{ \int_t^{t+\tau} \sigma_s^2 ds + \int_t^{t+\tau} \int_{\mathbb{R}} j^2 \nu_s^Q(dj) \right\} = \mathbb{E}_t^Q \left\{ \int_t^{t+\tau} f^Q(X_s) ds \right\},$$

where $f^Q(X_s) = \Pi_0^Q + \Pi_1^Q X + X^\top \Pi_2 X + \exp \{ \Pi_3 + \Pi_4^\top X \}$, $\Pi_0^Q = \Pi_0 + l_0 \int_{\mathbb{R}} j^2 \tilde{\nu}^Q(dj)$, $\Pi_1^Q = \Pi_1 + l_1 \int_{\mathbb{R}} j^2 \tilde{\nu}^Q(dj)$, and $\tilde{\nu}^Q(dj)$ is the marginal distribution of jumps in $Y$.

Denote the transition density of the process $X$ as $p(X_s|s-t, X_t)$, and let $u = -iv$ in $\Psi$ with $v \in \mathbb{R}^N$, we have

$$\mathbb{E}_t^Q \left( f^Q(X_s) \bigg| X_t = x \right) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} f^Q(x') p(x'|s-t, x) dx'$$

$$= \frac{1}{(2\pi)^N} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} f^Q(x') e^{iv^\top x'} \Psi(s, t, -iv, x) dx' dv.$$

We then take advantage of the tempered distributions (see e.g. Kanwal (2004)) to simplify the integral with respect to $x'$. A similar idea has been used in Chen and Joslin (2012). Consider the quadratic part first. Note that

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (\Pi_0^Q + (\Pi_1^Q)^\top x' + x'^\top (\Pi_2) x') e^{iv^\top x'} dx' = (2\pi)^N \left( \Pi_0^Q - i(\Pi_1^Q)^\top \nabla_v - \nabla_v(\Pi_2) \nabla_v \right) \delta(v),$$

$$23$$
where $\delta(\cdot)$ is Dirac delta that satisfies $\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \delta(v)dv = 1$, and $\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \delta(v)g(v)dv = g(0)$ for any test function $g$. Therefore, by direct calculations we obtain

$$
\mathbb{E}^Q\left(\Pi_0^Q + (\Pi_1^Q)^\top X_s + X_s^\top (\Pi_2) X_s | X_t = x\right) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \left(\Pi_0^Q - i(\Pi_1^Q)^\top \nabla_v - \nabla_v \Pi_2 \nabla_v\right) \delta(v)\Psi(s, t, -iv, x)dv

= \Pi_0^Q + (\Pi_1^Q)^\top \nabla_v \Psi(s, t, u, x) \bigg|_{u=0} + \nabla_u \Pi_2 \nabla_u \Psi(s, t, u, x) \bigg|_{u=0}.
$$

For the exponential part, we have similarly

$$
\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} e^{\Pi_3 + (\Pi_4)^\top x'} e^{iv^\top x'} dx' = (2\pi)^N e^{\Pi_3} \delta(v - i\Pi_4),
$$

so that we can derive

$$
\mathbb{E}^Q\left(e^{\Pi_3 + (\Pi_4)^\top X_s} | X_t = x\right) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} e^{\Pi_3} \delta(v - i\Pi_4) \Psi(s, t, -iv, x)dv = e^{\Pi_3} \Psi(s, t, \Pi_4, x).
$$

The pricing formulae for variance swaps follow immediately. Note that we have applied properties of tempered distributions to simplify the calculations, all of which can be found in Kanwal (2004).

The same technique has been applied by Amengual and Xiu (2012) for pricing VIX derivatives.

## B Two-Factor Volatility Models

### B.1 Example: $A_0(2)$ Model

The $A_0(2)$ model specifies the dynamics of $X$ as:

$$
\begin{bmatrix}
    dX_{1t} \\
    dX_{2t}
\end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix}
    \kappa_1^Q & 0 \\
    \kappa_2^Q & \kappa_2^Q
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
    X_{1t} \\
    X_{2t}
\end{bmatrix} dt + \begin{bmatrix}
    dW_{1t}^Q \\
    dW_{2t}^Q
\end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix}
    dZ_{1t}^Q \\
    dZ_{2t}^Q
\end{bmatrix},
$$

with $\kappa_1^Q < 0$, $\kappa_2^Q < 0$, $l_0 \geq 0$, and $l_{11} = l_{12} = 0$. As it turns out, both factors need to follow Ornstein-Uhlenbeck processes. Jumps follow compound Poisson processes with independent jump sizes following double exponential distributions:

- size of $Z_{1t}^Q \sim \begin{cases} 
    \exp(\beta_{1+}^Q), & q_1 \\
    -\exp(\beta_{1-}^Q), & 1 - q_1
\end{cases}$, and

- size of $Z_{2t}^Q \sim \begin{cases} 
    \exp(\beta_{2+}^Q), & q_2 \\
    -\exp(\beta_{2-}^Q), & 1 - q_2
\end{cases}$.

Their intensity is specified as $l_0$. For this model, we specify the dynamics under $\mathbb{P}$ as

$$
\begin{bmatrix}
    dX_{1t} \\
    dX_{2t}
\end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix}
    \lambda_1^P & \kappa_1^P \\
    \lambda_2^P & \kappa_2^P
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
    X_{1t} \\
    X_{2t}
\end{bmatrix} dt + \begin{bmatrix}
    dW_{1t}^P \\
    dW_{2t}^P
\end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix}
    dZ_{1t}^P \\
    dZ_{2t}^P
\end{bmatrix},
$$

where jumps in $Z_{1t}^P$ and $Z_{2t}^P$ are specified with the same mixture probabilities but in different sizes $\beta_{1,+/-}^P$ and $\beta_{2,+/-}^P$. Similarly, the market price of risk is implicitly determined. Compared to the square-root factor, an Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factor is not restricted by the Feller condition, hence potentially allowing slower mean-reversion and larger volatility of volatility.
B.2 Example: \(\mathcal{A}_1(2)\) Model

Another model that incorporates negative jumps can be specified as

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
\frac{dX_{1t}}{dX_{2t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix}
\lambda_1^Q & \kappa_1^Q \\
\kappa_1^Q & \kappa_1^Q \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
X_{1t} \\
X_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} dt + \begin{bmatrix}
\sqrt{X_{1t}} & 0 \\
0 & \sqrt{1 + \beta_{21}X_{1t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
dW_{1t} \\
dW_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix}
dZ_{1t} \\
dZ_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix},
\]

where \(X_1\) is a square-root factor, and \(X_2\) is an Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factor. To guarantee admissibility and stationarity of the model, we require \(\beta_{21} \geq 0\), \(l_0 \geq 0\), \(l_{11} > 0\), \(l_{12} = 0\), \(\kappa_1^Q < 0\), and \(\lambda_1^Q \geq 1/2\). Jumps of \(X_1\) and \(X_2\) follow compound Poisson processes with independent jump sizes satisfying the exponential or double exponential distributions:

\[
\text{size of } Z_{1t}^Q \sim \exp(\beta_{1+}^Q), \quad \text{and} \quad \text{size of } Z_{2t}^Q \sim \begin{cases} 
\exp(\beta_{2+}^Q) & \text{with probability } q_2 \\
-\exp(\beta_{2-}^Q) & \text{with probability } 1 - q_2.
\end{cases}
\]

Their intensity is specified as \((l_0 + l_{11}X_{1t})\beta_{1+}^Q dt\), hence the compensator is given by

\[
(l_0 + l_{11}X_{1t})(q_2\beta_{2+}^Q - (1 - q_2)\beta_{2-}^Q) dt.
\]

For this model, we specify the dynamics under the objective measure \(\mathbb{P}\) as

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
\frac{dX_{1t}}{dX_{2t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix}
\lambda_1^P & \kappa_1^P \\
\kappa_1^P & \kappa_1^P \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
X_{1t} \\
X_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} dt + \begin{bmatrix}
\sqrt{X_{1t}} & 0 \\
0 & \sqrt{1 + \beta_{21}X_{1t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
dW_{1t} \\
dW_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix}
dZ_{1t} \\
dZ_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix},
\]

which implies an affine specification of risk premia. Jumps are of the same type with the same intensity and mixture probability but different sizes \(\beta_{1+}^P\), \(\beta_{2+}^P\), and \(\beta_{2-}^P\). This model is similar to the stochastic central tendency model discussed by Amengual (2008) and Mencia and Sentana (2012) for variance swaps and VIX derivatives, respectively.

B.3 Example: \(\mathcal{A}_2(2)\) Model

The dynamics of the state variables in the \(\mathcal{A}_2(2)\) model are

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
\frac{dX_{1t}}{dX_{2t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix}
\lambda_1^Q & \kappa_1^Q \\
\kappa_1^Q & \kappa_1^Q \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
X_{1t} \\
X_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} dt + \begin{bmatrix}
\sqrt{X_{1t}} & 0 \\
0 & \sqrt{X_{2t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
dW_{1t} \\
dW_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix}
dZ_{1t} \\
dZ_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix},
\]

with \(l_{11} > 0\) and \(l_{12} > 0\). Jumps in \(Z_{1t}\) and \(Z_{2t}\) cannot be negative. This model has been applied to fit variance swap prices by Egloff et al. (2010) and Ait-Sahalia et al. (2012).

The corresponding \(\mathbb{P}\) measure dynamics is specified as:

\[
\begin{bmatrix}
\frac{dX_{1t}}{dX_{2t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix}
\lambda_1^P & \kappa_1^P \\
\kappa_1^P & \kappa_1^P \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
X_{1t} \\
X_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} dt + \begin{bmatrix}
\sqrt{X_{1t}} & 0 \\
0 & \sqrt{X_{2t}} \\
\end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix}
dW_{1t} \\
dW_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix}
dZ_{1t} \\
dZ_{2t} \\
\end{bmatrix},
\]

with exponentially distributed jumps and different mean parameters. To ensure the positivity of \(X_1\) and \(X_2\), we could impose the Feller-type conditions for multivariate affine models given by Duffie and Kan (1996).
B.4 Return Dynamics

While we specify different models for volatility, we use the same dynamics for the returns. More specifically,

\[ dY_t = \mu_t^Q dt + \sigma_t dW_t^Q + dJ_t^Q \]

where the size of \( J_t^Q \) follows Gaussian distribution with mean \( \mu_j^Q \) and variance \( \sigma_j^2 \), and the intensity is \( l_0 + l_1^T X_t \). As a result, the compensator in \( dJ_t^Q \) is \( \left( (\mu_j^Q)^2 + \sigma_j^2 \right) \left( l_0 + l_1^T X_t \right) dt \). The drift \( \mu_t^Q \) can be written down explicitly:

\[
\mu_t^Q = r_t - d_t - \frac{1}{2} \sigma_t^2 - \left( e^{\mu_j^Q + \frac{1}{2} \sigma_j^2} - 1 - \left( (\mu_j^Q)^2 + \sigma_j^2 \right) \right) \left( l_0 + l_1^T X_t \right) dt.
\]

Since the interest rate \( r_t \) and dividend \( d_t \) do not affect variance swap prices, their risk neutral dynamics are not identified, hence they are left unspecified.

As the payoff of variance swaps depends on the underlying index \( Y_t \) only through its risk neutral quadratic variation, variance swaps contain much less information about the dynamics of \( Y_t \), compared to European options. As a result, with variance swaps, we can only identify the risk neutral jump of \( Y \) up to its expected quadratic variation. For this reason, we impose no market price of risk on the variance of jump sizes in \( Y \), so that this parameter can be identified from the \( \mathbb{P} \)-measure dynamics using the S&P 500 index. The mean of jump sizes in \( Y \) absorbs all the risk premia of the price jumps, which can be identified from the expected quadratic variation under the \( \mathbb{Q} \)-measure. This assumption is also imposed by e.g. Aït-Sahalia et al. (2012).

The \( \mathbb{P} \)-dynamics is given by

\[ dY_t = \mu_t^P dt + \sigma_t dB_t^P + dJ_t^P \]

where \( \mu_t^P \) is the drift, \( dJ_t^P \) is the compensated jump process, with the size of jumps under \( \mathbb{P} \) being Gaussian with mean \( \mu_j^P \) and variance \( \sigma_j^2 \). The intensity is the same under \( \mathbb{P} \) and \( \mathbb{Q} \), i.e. \( (l_0 + l_1^T X_t) \).

We also introduce \( \rho_1 \) and \( \rho_2 \) as the correlations between \( W_t^P \) and \( B_t^P \) and between \( W_t^P \) and \( B_t^P \), which incorporate the well-known leverage effect.

C Likelihood Inference in Detail

Below we give a more detailed description of the Gibbs blocks used in the posterior simulator. For the purpose of concreteness in this section we focus on the \( A_1(2) \) model.

C.1 Time Discretization and Joint Likelihood

A time discretization of the model with time interval \( \Delta \) yields

\[
y_i := Y_i - Y_{(i-1)} = \mu \Delta + \sigma_{i-1} \sqrt{\Delta} \left[ \sqrt{1 - \rho_1^2 - \rho_2^2 \epsilon_{0i} + \rho_1 \epsilon_{1i} + \rho_2 \epsilon_{2i}} \right] + j_n_i, \quad (C.1)
\]
with Pr($n$) truncated normals (TN) with a mixing variate that takes a positive (negative) value with mean $\mu_i$.

Completing the square in the previous expression we can easily obtain the mean and variance for $p$ and $y_i$:

$$p = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi \sigma^2}} e^{-\frac{(y_i - \mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}}$$

$\lambda_i$ and $\epsilon_{0i}$, $\epsilon_{1i}$, and $\epsilon_{2i}$ are standard normal variates with zero correlations, $n_i$, $z_{1i}$ and $z_{2i}$ are Gaussian, Gamma, and mixture of Gammas, respectively. Note that $\mu = \mu^p - l_0\mu^p_1$, $\lambda_1 = \lambda_1^p - l_0\beta_{1+}^p$, $\lambda_2 = \lambda_2^p - l_0(q_2\beta_{2+}^P - (1 - q_2)\beta_{2-}^P)$, $\kappa_{11} = \kappa_{11}^p - l_{11}\beta_{1+}^p$, $\kappa_{21} = \kappa_{21}^p - l_{11}(q_2\beta_{2+}^P - (1 - q_2)\beta_{2-}^P)$, and $\kappa_{22} = \kappa_{22}^p - l_{12}(q_2\beta_{2+}^P - (1 - q_2)\beta_{2-}^P)$.

The joint likelihood of the observables is then given by:

$$L(Y, P|V, \Theta, A_1(1)) = \prod_{i=1}^T p(y_i, X_i|X_{i-1}, j_i, z_{1i}, z_{2i}, n_i) \times p(j_i, z_{1i}, z_{2i}|X_{i-1}) \times p(P_i|X_i, \Theta),$$

which includes both the likelihood from the Euler discretization of the process and the likelihood of the variance swap rates. Eraker et al. (2003) show that discretization performs well with daily data. Alternatively, one could introduce a set of auxiliary data points in between of each par of sampled latent variables and integrate them out of the likelihood function by MCMC.

### C.2 Jump Times and Sizes

In our application the jump indicator $n_i$ is a binary random variable (taking on 0 or 1). To compute the Bernoulli probability, we use the conditional density of increments to volatility and returns to get that $Pr(n_i = 1|V, \Theta, Y, P)$, which is equal to

$$p(y_i, X_i|X_{i-1}, j_i, z_{1i}, z_{2i}, n_i = 1, \Theta) \times Pr(n_i = 1|X_{i-1})$$

$$\sum_{s=0,1} p(y_i, X_i|X_{i-1}, j_i, z_{1i}, z_{2i}, n_i = s, \Theta) \times Pr(n_i = s|X_{i-1}^{(1)}),$$

where $p(y_i, X_i|X_{i-1}, j_i, z_{1i}, z_{2i}, n_i = s, \Theta)$ is trivariate normal with mean and covariance matrix that can be easily obtained from (C.1) and $Pr(n_i = 1|X_{i-1}) = (l_0 + l_{11}X_{i-1})\Delta$. Not surprisingly, the conditional posterior of jump times does not depend on the option prices directly since option prices do themselves not depend on the jump indicator.

To sample $j_i$, we note from (6) that $p(j_i|y_i, X_i, X_{i-1}, n_i = 1)$ is proportional to

$$p(y_i|X_i, X_{i-1}, j_i, n_i = 1) \times p(j_i|n_i = 1).$$

Completing the square in the previous expression we can easily obtain the mean and variance for the conditional posterior of $j_i$ which is normal.

Analogous computations allow us to sample $z_{1i}$ and $z_{2i}$, which have a discrete scale mixture of truncated normals (TN) with a mixing variate that takes a positive (negative) value with mean $\mu_{k,+,i}$ ($\mu_{k,-,i}$) that can be easily obtained for $k = 1, 2$ by completing the squares. That is, if $s_{k,i} \in \{0, 1\}$, with Pr($s_{k,i} = 1|y_i, X_i, \Theta) = q_k$, then

$$z_{k,i} = s_{k,i} \cdot TN(\mu_{k,+,i}^*, \sigma_{k,+,i}^2; z_{k,i} > 0) + (1 - s_{k,i}) \cdot TN(\mu_{k,-,i}^*, \sigma_{k,-,i}^2; z_{k,i} < 0),$$

27
where $\sigma^2_{k,i}$ denotes the corresponding conditional posterior variance of the jump size in $z_{k,i}$.

Finally, when $n_i = 0$, the conditional posteriors of $j_i$, $z_{1,i}$ and $z_{2,i}$ are the priors implied by the model assumptions, as the data provide no information about them.

### C.3 Latent Factors

The conditional posterior for latent factors is not known in closed form. To sample from it, we collect terms in (6) where $X_i$ is included, which is proportional to

$$p(X_{i+1}|X_i, z_{1,i+1}, z_{2,i+1}, n_{i+1}) \times p(X_i|X_{i-1}, z_{1,i}, z_{2,i}, n_i) \times p(y_{i+1}|X_i, X_{i+1}, j_{i+1}, n_{i+1}) \times p(y_i|X_{i-1}, X_i, j_i, n_i) \times p(P_i|X_i, \Theta) \times p(n_{i+1}|X_i),$$

where the first five densities are Gaussian and the last term is binomial. At the $g$-th iteration of the sampler, we then draw from its conditional posterior using a random-walk Metropolis algorithm with the Gaussian proposal density with mean and variance computed as in Proposition 2 of Eraker (2001) but taking into account the presence of jumps. The acceptance rate of this step is in the 20-30% range for all models.

### C.4 $\Theta_M$ and $\Theta_H$

Conditional on jump sizes, jump times, spot variance, short-term variance level, and remaining parameter vectors, the posterior of $\Theta_M$ is proportional to (6). Since this conditional distribution is nonstandard, it is sampled using a Metropolis step with a normal source density centered at the current draw and covariance matrix proportional to the Hessian of $L(Y,P|V,\Theta,M) - H(V|\Theta,M)$ at the peak of $\Theta_M$. The Hessian was computed by concentrating the latent variables and remaining parameters on their posterior means from a preliminary run of the algorithm. An analogous but simpler procedure, since $H(V|\Theta,M)$ does not appear in the conditional posterior, allows us to draw $\Theta_H$. The acceptance rate of this step is around 20% for all three models. The priors are relatively uninformative but still impose the relevant constraints.

### C.5 $\Theta_P$ and $\Theta_E$

A similar procedure to the one mentioned above can be used to sample $\Theta_P$. In practice, however, since those parameters do not depend on variance swap rates once we condition on $V$, it is often the case that the conditional posterior distribution is available and therefore one can sample from it directly. The same comment applies to the variances of pricing errors as long as one chooses appropriately both the pricing error distributions and priors.

As for $\beta_{1+}$, recall $z_{1,i} \sim \text{Exponential}(\beta_{1+})$, so that conditional on $z_{1,i}$, and setting a conjugate prior for $\beta_{1+}$, say $\pi_{\beta_{1+}}(\beta_{1+}) \sim \text{InvGam}(\delta_{\beta_{1+}1}, \delta_{\beta_{1+}2})$, we have that $\beta_{1+} | \ldots \sim \text{invGam}(\delta^*_{\beta_{1+}1}, \delta^*_{\beta_{1+}2})$
with $\delta_{\beta_{1+}} = N_J + \delta_{\beta_{1+}}$ and $\delta_{\beta_{1+}^2} = \delta_{\beta_{1+}^2} + \sum_{i=1}^{N_J} z_{1,i}$ and where $N_J = \sum_{i=1}^{T} n_i$. Similarly, we proceed with $\beta_{2+}$ and $\beta_{2-}$, but using the appropriate sample sizes $N_J^+ = \sum_{i=1}^{T} n_i \{ z_{i+} > 0 \}$ and $N_J^- = N_J - N_J^+$ and with $\pi_{\beta_{2+}}(\beta_{2+}) \sim invGam(\delta_{\beta_{2+}}, \delta_{\beta_{2+}^2})$ and $\pi_{\beta_{2-}}(\beta_{2-}) \sim invGam(\delta_{\beta_{2-}}, \delta_{\beta_{2-}^2})$ being the corresponding priors.

Conditional on $X$, $\beta_{1+}^p$, $\beta_{2+}^p$, $\beta_{2-}^p$, $q_2$, $\Theta_M$ and jump times and sizes, using the jump adjusted processes $\tilde{Y}_i = Y_i - j_i n_i$, $\tilde{X}_{1i} = X_{1i} - z_{1,i} n_i$ and $\tilde{X}_{2i} = X_{2i} - z_{2,i} n_i$, we can sample $\mu^p$, $\kappa_{11}^p$, $\kappa_{22}^p$, and $\kappa_{21}^p$ using the standard normal multivariate regression model with known variance. In this context, prior information for those parameters can be easily introduced through Gaussian conjugate priors. Finally, we use a Metropolis step to compute the conditional posterior of $\rho_1$ and $\rho_2$, which is proportional to $p(y_i, X_i|X_{i-1}, j_i, z_i, n_i)$. 

29
References


Baumohl, B. (2010), *The Secrets of Economic Indicators*, Prentice Hall.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>VRP 1M</th>
<th>VRP 2M</th>
<th>VRP 1Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aït-Sahalia et al. (2014b)</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>1996 - 2010</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>AJD</td>
<td>[-7%, 0%]</td>
<td>[-10%, -0.5%]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amengual (2008)</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>1996 - 2007</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>AJD</td>
<td>[-5%, 0%]</td>
<td>[-7%, -0.5%]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bollerslev et al. (2011)</td>
<td>SPO</td>
<td>1990 - 2003</td>
<td>Intraday</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>[-20%, 5%]*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corradi et al. (2013)</td>
<td>VIX</td>
<td>1950 - 2006</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>[-30%, 8%]*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fan et al. (2013)</td>
<td>VIX</td>
<td>2006 - 2011</td>
<td>Intraday</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>[-30%, 20%]*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fusari and Gonzalez-Perez (2012)</td>
<td>SPO</td>
<td>1996 - 2010</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Log-OU</td>
<td>[-20%, 3%]</td>
<td>[-23%, 1%]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhou (2009)</td>
<td>VIX</td>
<td>1990 - 2008</td>
<td>Intraday</td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>[-200%, 40%]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This Paper</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>1996 - 2013</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>$A_0(2)$</td>
<td>[-2.17%, 2.94%]</td>
<td>[-3.62%, 4.04%]</td>
<td>[-10.25%, 1.52%]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$A_1(2)$</td>
<td>[-2.67%, 1.11%]</td>
<td>[-4.49%, 1.86%]</td>
<td>[-11.81%, 0.85%]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$A_2(2)$</td>
<td>[-10.09%, -0.12%]</td>
<td>[-13.33%, -0.09%]</td>
<td>[-15.80%, 0.15%]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 1: Selection of Literature Reporting Variance Risk Premia Estimates

Note: This table collects estimates from papers that report either the point estimates or time series plots of variance or volatility risk premia. In the Data column, “VS” denotes variance swaps, “SPO” denotes S&P 500 options, and “VIX” is the CBOE volatility index. In the Model column, “AD” refers to affine diffusion, “AJD” denotes affine-jump diffusion, “MF” means model-free, and “Log-OU” is a log-affine process with two Ornstein-Uhlenbeck factors. The columns of VRP provide the bounds of the estimated time series of risk premia, with 1M, 3M and 1Y referring to the 1-month, 2-month, and 1-year time-to-maturities. Most MF methodologies provide positive estimates of variance risk premia for certain periods of time, so that their upper bounds are positive.

* provides volatility risk premia.

** gives a point estimate with the standard error provided in the brackets.
### Table 2: Prior Distribution

Note: This table presents the mean, standard deviation, and 95% highest prior density region for the priors we use to implement our estimation procedure. $\text{Gamma}(\alpha, \beta)$ denotes a gamma random variate with parameters $\alpha$ and $\beta$, such that its mean is $\alpha \beta$ and variance $\alpha \beta^2$; $\text{Inv.Gamma}(\alpha, \beta)$ denotes an inverse gamma random variate with parameters $\alpha$ and $\beta$ such that if $X \sim \text{Inv.Gamma}(\alpha, \beta)$ then $X^{-1} \sim \text{Gamma}(\alpha, \beta^{-1})$; $\text{Uniform}(a, b)$ denotes a random variable which is uniformly distributed on the interval $[a, b]$; and $\text{N}(\mu, \sigma^2)$ denotes a Gaussian random variate with mean $\mu$ and variance $\sigma^2$. Details on models and parameterizations are given in Appendix B.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>$A_0(2)$</th>
<th>$A_1(2)$</th>
<th>$A_2(2)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>True</td>
<td>Bias</td>
<td>Stdev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_1^Q$</td>
<td>6.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_2^Q$</td>
<td>-4.500</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{11}^Q$</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{12}^Q$</td>
<td>-0.200</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{21}$</td>
<td>0.210</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{11}$</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{22}$</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{1}$</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\gamma_{1}$</td>
<td>0.400</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$l_0$</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$l_{11}$</td>
<td>10.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$l_{12}$</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\mu_{1}^Q$</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\sigma_{1}^Q$</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>0.640</td>
<td>1.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{0 \times 10^4}$</td>
<td>12.000</td>
<td>-1.940</td>
<td>2.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{11 \times 10^4}$</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-0.048</td>
<td>1.397</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{12 \times 10^4}$</td>
<td>12.000</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.854</td>
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<td>$\Pi_{21 \times 10^4}$</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-0.161</td>
<td>0.395</td>
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<td>$\Pi_{22 \times 10^4}$</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$\Pi_{42}$</td>
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<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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Table 3: Simulation Results for $\Theta_M$ and $\Theta_{II}$

Note: This table provides a summary of a Monte Carlo simulation exercise with 100 replications for the two examples of two-factor volatility models that we introduce in Appendix B. We report true values, bias and standard deviations across the simulations for $\Theta_M$, the parameters determining the dynamics of the latent factors under the risk-neutral measure, and $\Theta_{II}$, the parameters defining $f^Q$. 

[38]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>$\alpha_0(2)$</th>
<th>$\alpha_1(2)$</th>
<th>$\alpha_2(2)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>True</td>
<td>Bias</td>
<td>Stdev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_1^p$</td>
<td>-1.750</td>
<td>-0.264</td>
<td>0.694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_2^p$</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>-0.315</td>
<td>0.938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{11}^p$</td>
<td>-3.600</td>
<td>-0.260</td>
<td>0.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{12}^p$</td>
<td>-0.600</td>
<td>-0.093</td>
<td>0.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{1+}$</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{2+}$</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{2-}$</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\rho_1$</td>
<td>-0.700</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\rho_2$</td>
<td>-0.450</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\mu_1^p$</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.046</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 4: Simulation Results for $\Theta_P$ and $\Theta_E$

Note: This table provides a summary of a Monte Carlo simulation exercise with 100 replications for the two examples of two-factor volatility models that we introduce in Appendix B. We report true values, bias and standard deviations across the simulations for the additional parameters that characterize the $P$-dynamics, $\Theta_P$, and the pricing error variances, summarized in $\Theta_E$. 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Release Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am First Friday of each month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADP Employment Change</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:15 am - Two days before Employment situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Jobless Claims</td>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>8:30 am every Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Income</td>
<td>Consumer Spending and Confidence</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am 4 weeks after end of reported month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Spending</td>
<td>Consumer Spending and Confidence</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am 4 weeks after end of reported month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advance Retail Sales</td>
<td>Consumer Spending and Confidence</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am 2 weeks after end of reported month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Confidence</td>
<td>Consumer Spending and Confidence</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>10:00 am - Last Tuesday of month being surveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>National Output and Inventories</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>8:30 am - Final week of Jan Apr Jul Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durable Goods Orders</td>
<td>National Output and Inventories</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am three to four weeks after the end of reporting month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISM Manufacturing</td>
<td>National Output and Inventories</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>10:00 am First Business day after reporting month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago PMI</td>
<td>National Output and Inventories</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>10:00 am First Business day of month being covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empire State Manufacturing</td>
<td>National Output and Inventories</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am around 15th of month being reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Inventories</td>
<td>National Output and Inventories</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>10:00 am released six weeks after the month ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production and Utilization</td>
<td>National Output and Inventories</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>9:15 am released the 15th of the following month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Residential Sales</td>
<td>Housing and Construction</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am released two to three weeks following month being covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOMC Meeting</td>
<td>Central Bank</td>
<td>Eight Times</td>
<td>2:15 pm of day of conclusion of FOMC meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Reserver Chairman Speech</td>
<td>Central Bank</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECB Governing Council Meeting</td>
<td>Central Bank</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>Prices, Productivity, Wages</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am second or third week following month being covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPI</td>
<td>Prices, Productivity, Wages</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>8:30 am two or three weeks after month ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Cost Index</td>
<td>Prices, Productivity, Wages</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>8:30 am - Last Thursday of Jan Apr Jul Oct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5: Economic Indicators**

Note: In this table, we report the details of the 21 macroeconomic news announcements or central bank events used in Section 4.1. All times are reported in Eastern Standard Time. Source: Bloomberg and the book by Baumohl (2010) on economic indicators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>$A_{0}(2)$ Mean</th>
<th>$A_{0}(2)$ Std Error</th>
<th>$A_{0}(2)$ HPD 95%</th>
<th>$A_{1}(2)$ Mean</th>
<th>$A_{1}(2)$ Std Error</th>
<th>$A_{1}(2)$ HPD 95%</th>
<th>$A_{2}(2)$ Mean</th>
<th>$A_{2}(2)$ Std Error</th>
<th>$A_{2}(2)$ HPD 95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_0^Q$</td>
<td>6.194</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>[6.176, 6.211]</td>
<td>6.216</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>[6.210, 6.223]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_1^Q$</td>
<td>-4.217</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>[-4.239, -4.196]</td>
<td>-4.345</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>[-4.454, -4.423]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{11}^Q$</td>
<td>1.955</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>[1.918, 1.999]</td>
<td>-0.215</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>[-0.206, -0.192]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{12}^Q$</td>
<td>-0.200</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>[-0.206, -0.192]</td>
<td>0.568</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>[0.554, 0.583]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{21}$</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>[0.136, 0.157]</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>[0.137, 0.158]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{21}^Q$</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>[0.050, 0.071]</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>[0.039, 0.047]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\sigma_1^Q$</td>
<td>0.203</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>[0.197, 0.210]</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>[0.179, 0.218]</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\mu_{1}^Q$</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>[0.027, 0.051]</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>[0.085, 0.135]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\sigma_2^Q$</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>[0.272, 0.293]</td>
<td>0.755</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>[0.710, 0.782]</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$l_{0}$</td>
<td>15.439</td>
<td>0.733</td>
<td>[13.493, 16.451]</td>
<td>13.575</td>
<td>0.782</td>
<td>[12.097, 14.425]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$h_{11}$</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>[0.101, 0.141]</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[0.020, 0.029]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$h_{12}$</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>[0.000, 0.021]</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>[0.008, 0.025]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\mu_{2}^Q$</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[-0.017, -0.014]</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[-0.020, -0.018]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$\sigma_3^Q$</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[0.007, 0.011]</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[0.003, 0.007]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{11}^Q \times 10^4$</td>
<td>27.229</td>
<td>2.782</td>
<td>[22.135, 33.332]</td>
<td>16.119</td>
<td>2.316</td>
<td>[13.078, 21.396]</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{12}^Q \times 10^4$</td>
<td>81.077</td>
<td>4.444</td>
<td>[73.244, 90.876]</td>
<td>-50.536</td>
<td>4.961</td>
<td>[-60.216, -41.155]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{12}^Q \times 10^4$</td>
<td>0.925</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>[1.841, 1.829]</td>
<td>-0.742</td>
<td>0.803</td>
<td>[-2.261, 0.782]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{21}^Q \times 10^4$</td>
<td>63.583</td>
<td>1.739</td>
<td>[60.870, 68.943]</td>
<td>43.464</td>
<td>3.307</td>
<td>[38.356, 51.886]</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{21}^Q \times 10^4$</td>
<td>0.993</td>
<td>0.781</td>
<td>[-0.463, 2.548]</td>
<td>1.340</td>
<td>0.548</td>
<td>[0.280, 2.251]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{22}^Q \times 10^4$</td>
<td>0.504</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>[0.167, 0.903]</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>[0.058, 0.576]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{31}^Q$</td>
<td>-3.419</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[-3.423, -3.417]</td>
<td>-3.854</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[-3.855, -3.852]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{31}^Q$</td>
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<td>0.001</td>
<td>[1.496, 1.501]</td>
<td>1.253</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[1.253, 1.254]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\Pi_{32}^Q$</td>
<td>0.468</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[0.466, 0.469]</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>[0.418, 0.428]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Posterior Estimates of $\Theta_{M}$ and $\Theta_{II}$

Note: This table presents the posterior estimates for $\Theta_{M}$, the parameters determining the dynamics of the latent factors under the risk-neutral measure, and $\Theta_{II}$, the parameters defining $\Gamma^Q$ across all models. We report the mean, the standard deviation, and the 95% highest posterior density intervals for the $A_{0}(2)$ and $A_{1}(2)$ for the Type I specification. We use daily data on variance swaps from January 4, 1996 to January 11, 2013. The number of daily observations is 4,276, excluding weekends and holidays.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>$A_0(2)$</th>
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<th>$A_1(2)$</th>
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<th></th>
<th>$A_2(2)$</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std Error</td>
<td>HPD 95%</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std Error</td>
<td>HPD 95%</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std Error</td>
<td>HPD 95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_1^p$</td>
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<td>0.261</td>
<td>[-1.584, -0.560]</td>
<td>5.980</td>
<td>0.783</td>
<td>[4.466, 7.528]</td>
<td>9.179</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>[7.157, 11.209]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\lambda_2^p$</td>
<td>-0.101</td>
<td>0.307</td>
<td>[-0.707, 0.499]</td>
<td>-10.365</td>
<td>1.196</td>
<td>[-12.693, -8.009]</td>
<td>-6.384</td>
<td>1.195</td>
<td>[-8.740, -4.038]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{011}$</td>
<td>-3.581</td>
<td>0.463</td>
<td>[-4.492, -2.671]</td>
<td>-4.648</td>
<td>0.555</td>
<td>[-5.740, -3.571]</td>
<td>-5.663</td>
<td>0.587</td>
<td>[-6.819, -4.514]</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4.653</td>
<td>0.635</td>
<td>[3.409, 5.898]</td>
<td>4.887</td>
<td>0.768</td>
<td>[3.369, 6.395]</td>
<td>5.662</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>[4.145, 7.186]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\kappa_{21}$</td>
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<td>0.149</td>
<td>[-0.809, -0.225]</td>
<td>-0.947</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>[-1.271, -0.624]</td>
<td>-0.396</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>[-0.722, -0.073]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\beta_{11}$</td>
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<td>0.013</td>
<td>[0.116, 0.167]</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>[0.091, 0.124]</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>[0.168, 0.301]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{21}$</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>[0.086, 0.127]</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>[0.144, 0.201]</td>
<td>0.226</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>[0.165, 0.307]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{31}$</td>
<td>0.185</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>[0.152, 0.223]</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>[0.127, 0.181]</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>[0.199, 0.348]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\mu_{1}^{p}$</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[-0.004, 0.000]</td>
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<td>0.001</td>
<td>[-0.011, -0.008]</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>[-0.033, -0.015]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\mu_{1}$</td>
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<td>[-0.764, -0.728]</td>
<td>-0.664</td>
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<td>[-0.691, -0.638]</td>
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<td>0.012</td>
<td>[-0.514, -0.466]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\mu_{2}^{p}$</td>
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<td>[-0.450, -0.393]</td>
<td>-0.499</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>[-0.533, -0.463]</td>
<td>-0.715</td>
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<td>[-0.734, -0.695]</td>
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<td>$\mu_{2}$</td>
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<td>[0.019, 0.158]</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>[0.120, 0.262]</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>[-0.012, 0.145]</td>
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<tr>
<td>$s_{2,M}^{1}$</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>[0.135, 0.151]</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>[0.140, 0.156]</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>[0.136, 0.151]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$s_{2,M}^{2}$</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.004, 0.005]</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.004, 0.005]</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.004, 0.005]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$s_{2,M}^{3}$</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[0.044, 0.048]</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[0.043, 0.048]</td>
<td>0.045</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>[0.043, 0.047]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$s_{2,Y}^{1}$</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[0.060, 0.067]</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[0.062, 0.069]</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[0.060, 0.066]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$s_{2,Y}^{2}$</td>
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<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.003, 0.004]</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.003, 0.004]</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>[0.004, 0.004]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$s_{2,Y}^{3}$</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[0.052, 0.058]</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[0.054, 0.061]</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>[0.060, 0.067]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Posterior Estimates of $\Theta_P$ and $\Theta_E$

Note: This table presents the posterior estimates for the parameters that characterize the $\mathbb{P}$-dynamics, $\Theta_P$, and the pricing error variances $\Theta_E$. We report the mean, the standard deviation, and the 95% highest posterior density intervals for the $A_0(2)$ and $A_1(2)$ for the Type I specification. We use daily data on variance swaps from January 4, 1996 to January 11, 2013. The number of daily observations is 4,276, excluding weekends and holidays.
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>(1)</th>
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<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
<th>(10)</th>
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<td>(0.116)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TED</td>
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<td>(0.112)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>TERM</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td>(0.085)</td>
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<td>-0.022</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIQ</td>
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<td>-0.612**</td>
<td>(0.245)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>(0.183)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>0.004***</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.002**</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKEW</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExM</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.030***</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
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<td>-0.028***</td>
<td>(0.004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.020</td>
<td>(0.040)</td>
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<td>-0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
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<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
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<td>0.779***</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>0.785***</td>
<td>(0.037)</td>
<td>0.770***</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>0.796***</td>
<td>(0.031)</td>
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<tr>
<td>adj. $R^2$</td>
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<td>0.621</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.616</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>0.721</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td>0.74066</td>
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</table>

**Table 8: Regression Results on Factor $X_1$**

Note: In this table we report results from regression analysis to relate our volatility factors to several variables on economic fundamentals at a monthly frequency. Each column reports the results of estimating a linear regression of the posterior mean of the volatility factor $X_1$ on its lagged value (AR) and the innovation of the corresponding variable for each row. The last column corresponds to the multiple regression that includes all the explanatory variables we consider: TED spread, default spread (DEF), Chicago Fed National Activity Index (CFI), industrial production growth (IPG), term spread (TERM), monthly liquidity factor (LIQ), policy news index (POL), market skewness (SKEW), and excess market returns (ExM), see Section 4.1 for more information on their definitions. The coefficients corresponding to the constants are omitted from the regressions.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
<th>(10)</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.107</td>
<td>(0.178)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.952***</td>
<td>0.952***</td>
<td>0.948***</td>
<td>0.951***</td>
<td>0.950***</td>
<td>0.955***</td>
<td>0.953***</td>
<td>0.955***</td>
<td>0.961***</td>
</tr>
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<td>adj. $R^2$</td>
<td>0.923</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.923</td>
<td>0.919</td>
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<td>0.928</td>
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<td>0.919</td>
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</table>

**Table 9: Regression Results on Factor $X_2$**

Note: In this table we report results from regression analysis to relate our volatility factors to several variables on economic fundamentals at a monthly frequency. Each column reports the results of estimating a linear regression of the posterior mean of the volatility factor $X_2$ on its lagged value (AR) and the innovation of the corresponding variable for each row. The last column corresponds to the multiple regression that includes all the explanatory variables we consider: TED spread, default spread (DEF), Chicago Fed National Activity Index (CFI), industrial production growth (IPG), term spread (TERM), monthly liquidity factor (LIQ), policy news index (POL), market skewness (SKEW), and excess market returns (ExM), see Section 4.1 for more information on their definitions. The coefficients corresponding to the constants are omitted from the regressions.
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<th>Date</th>
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<th>News</th>
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<tr>
<td>08/18/98</td>
<td>-0.365</td>
<td>FOMC’s Decision to Leave Interest Rates Unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/01/98</td>
<td>-0.664</td>
<td>Fed Adds Money to the Banking System with Repo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/08/98</td>
<td>-0.455</td>
<td>Fed Chairman A. Greenspan’s Statement that a Rate Cut might be Forthcoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/14/98</td>
<td>-0.185</td>
<td>President Clinton Advocated a Coordinated Global Policy for Economic Growth in NYC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/23/98</td>
<td>-0.280</td>
<td>Fed Chairman A. Greenspan Testimony Before the Committee on the Budget, U.S. Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/11/99</td>
<td>-0.276</td>
<td>Fed Beige Book Release Shows that US Economy Remains Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/17/00</td>
<td>-0.296</td>
<td>Treasury Secretary L. Summers Statement that Fundamentals of Economy are in Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/03/01</td>
<td>-0.179</td>
<td>Fed’s Announcement of a Surprise, Inter-Meeting Rate Cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/17/05</td>
<td>-0.303</td>
<td>John Snow Call on China to Take An Intermediate Step in Revaluing its Currency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/19/05</td>
<td>-0.297</td>
<td>Fed Chairman A. Greenspan Steps up Criticism of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/15/06</td>
<td>-0.625</td>
<td>Fed Chairman B. Bernanke’s Speech on Inflation Expectations within Historical Ranges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/29/06</td>
<td>-0.325</td>
<td>FOMC Statement to Raise Its Target for the Federal Funds Rate by 25 Basis Points</td>
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<tr>
<td>07/19/06</td>
<td>-0.272</td>
<td>Fed Chairman B. Bernanke Warned that the Fed Must Guard Against Rising Prices Taking Hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/28/07</td>
<td>-0.396</td>
<td>Fed Chairman B. Bernanke Told a House Panel that Markets Seemed Working Well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/06/07</td>
<td>-0.217</td>
<td>Henry Paulson in Tokyo Said the Global Economy was As Strong As He’s Ever Seen</td>
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<tr>
<td>03/21/07</td>
<td>-0.244</td>
<td>Fed Policy Makers Concluded their Two-Day Policy Meeting by Keeping the Fed Fund Rate</td>
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<tr>
<td>06/27/07</td>
<td>-0.271</td>
<td>FOMC Announcement Generated Market Rebound the Previous Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/21/07</td>
<td>-0.188</td>
<td>Senator Dodd said the Fed to Deal with the Turmoil after Meeting with Paulson and Bernanke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/18/07</td>
<td>-0.353</td>
<td>FOMC Decided to Lower Its Target for the Federal Funds Rate by 50 Basis Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/18/08</td>
<td>-0.216</td>
<td>Fed Cut the Fed Funds Rate by Three-Quarters of a Percentage Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/14/08</td>
<td>-0.304</td>
<td>President Bush and Henry Paulson Separately Announced Revisions to the TARP Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/20/08</td>
<td>-0.413</td>
<td>Fed Chairman B. Bernanke Testimony on the Budget, U.S. House of Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/28/08</td>
<td>-0.230</td>
<td>Fed to Cut the Rate Following the Two-Day FOMC Meeting is Expected by the Market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13/08</td>
<td>-0.240</td>
<td>President Bush’s Speech on Financial Crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/19/08</td>
<td>-0.244</td>
<td>President Bush Declared that TARP Funds to be Spent on Programs Paulson Deemed Necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/21/09</td>
<td>-0.206</td>
<td>T. Geithner Testified about Nomination as Treasury Secretary before the Senate Finance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/24/09</td>
<td>-0.261</td>
<td>President Obama’s First Speech as the President to Joint Session of U.S. Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/10/10</td>
<td>-0.601</td>
<td>European Policy Makers Unveiled An Unprecedented Emergency Loan Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/21/11</td>
<td>-0.277</td>
<td>Japanese Nuclear Reactors Cooled Down and Situations in Libya Tamed by Unilateral Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/09/11</td>
<td>-0.370</td>
<td>FOMC Statement Explicitly Stating A Duration for An Exceptionally Low Target Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/27/11</td>
<td>-0.205</td>
<td>European Union Leaders Made a Bond Deal to Fix the Greek Debt Crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/02/13</td>
<td>-0.427</td>
<td>President Obama and Senator McConnell’s Encouraging Comments on the “Fiscal Cliff” Issue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Policy News Potentially Associated with Estimated Volatility Jumps

Note: In this table, we report the 32 potential events in the last column that may lead to the 40 largest negative volatility jumps in sample. The first column is the date of the event, and the second column shows changes in estimated spot variance. The remaining dates on which policy related news could not be related to downward jumps are May 28, Oct 15, Oct 20, and Oct 30 of 1998, Jan 7 of 2000, June 1 of 2005, July 30 of 2007, and Nov 13 of 2007.
Table 11: Regression Results on Volatility Jumps

Note: In this table, we report the regressions of the magnitudes of the jumps in each volatility factor as well as jumps in total volatility, onto the magnitudes of news shocks, defined in Section 4.1. All the shocks are standardized to have variance equal to 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Month</th>
<th>2 Months</th>
<th>3 Months</th>
<th>6 Months</th>
<th>9 Months</th>
<th>1 Year</th>
<th>2 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$A_0$</td>
<td>4136</td>
<td>4091</td>
<td>4078</td>
<td>4087</td>
<td>4125</td>
<td>4157</td>
<td>4255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A_1$</td>
<td>4169</td>
<td>4121</td>
<td>4071</td>
<td>3921</td>
<td>3690</td>
<td>3535</td>
<td>3165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A_2$</td>
<td>4276</td>
<td>4162</td>
<td>3864</td>
<td>3469</td>
<td>3408</td>
<td>3396</td>
<td>3453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># of Days with Significantly Positive Variance Risk Premia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$A_0$</td>
<td>1 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A_1$</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A_2$</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Time Series Ranges of Variance Risk Premia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$A_1$</td>
<td>[-2.67, 1.11] [-4.49, 1.86] [-8.89, 2.05] [-10.66, 1.47] [-11.81, 0.85] [-13.61, -0.05]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A_2$</td>
<td>[-10.09, -0.12] [-13.33, -0.09] [-14.36, -0.05] [-14.37, 0.04] [-15.04, 0.11] [-15.80, 0.15] [-16.04, 0.11]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 12: Comparison of the Variance Risk Premia Estimates**

Note: In this table, we report on the first two panels the number of days with significantly negative and positive variance risk premia estimates, respectively, for 7 different maturities, using the corresponding model in the first column. The significance level is 5%. On the bottom panel, we report the minimums and maximums of the point estimates of variance risk premia across the entire sample.
Note: In this figure, we highlight three days corresponding to the following media headlines: VIX, Vstoxx Drop by Records as Stocks Soar on Europe’s Emergency Loan Plan. - Bloomberg, Monday May 10, 2010; VIX Index Driven to Second-Biggest Percentage Drop (- 27%) on Fed’s Rate Statement. - Bloomberg, Tuesday Aug 09, 2011; The CBOE Volatility Index, or the VIX, Wall Street’s favored measure of anxiety, posted its biggest one-day decline since August 2011, as lawmakers closed in on a deal to avert the “fiscal cliff.” -Reuters, Monday Dec 31, 2012.
Figure 2: The S&P 500 Index and Variance Swap Rates

Note: The top panel plots the time series of the S&P 500 index and its returns from January 4, 1996 to January 11, 2013. The second panel shows the variance swap rates with 6 different maturities. The maximum number of daily observations is 4,276, excluding weekends and holidays. Since we have an unbalanced panel of variance swaps, different maturities may have different number of observations, which are reported in the legend. The bottom panel plots the slopes of corresponding variance swap rates, i.e.

\[
\frac{P(t, 1/2) - P(t, 1/4)}{P(t, 1/4)} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{P(t, 1) - P(t, 1/4)}{P(t, 1/4)},
\]

respectively, where \(P(t, \tau)\) denotes the variance swap rate at time \(t\) of a contract with time to maturity \(\tau\). Positive values reflect an upward sloping term structure while the opposite slope is implied by negative values.
Figure 3: Volatility Factors

Note: This figure reports the posterior estimates of the two latent factors for $A_0(2)$, $A_1(2)$, and $A_2(2)$ models. We use daily data on variance swaps from January 4, 1996 to January 11, 2013. The number of daily observations is 4,276, excluding weekends and holidays.
Figure 4: Out of Sample Performance

Note: This figure compares the estimated 1-month variance swap rates with the VIX across models over the entire sample period. The red solid line denotes the VIX from the CBOE, whereas the blue dash-dotted line is calculated based on the Q-parameters estimated from the variance swap rates with time-to-maturity of at least 2 months.
Figure 5: Decomposition of Spot Variances

Note: In this figure we decompose the spot variance $\sigma_t^2$ into its continuous and jump components for $A_0(2)$, $A_1(2)$, and $A_2(2)$, respectively. The left panel plots the identified jump components from the percent changes of the estimated spot variances, and the remaining Brownian shocks are plotted on the right panel. All these components are extracted based on the corresponding parametric models. The red circles correspond to the three aforementioned events in Figure 1.
Figure 6: Term Structure of Variance Risk Premia

Note: In this figure we plot the term structure of variance risk premia for the $A_0(2)$ model. The green solid lines plot the risk premia for the 2-month contracts, the blue dash-dotted line for the 6-month contracts, and the red dashed line for the 1-year contracts. The shaded areas around the lines plot the 95% confidence intervals. The magnitude of the variance risk premia increases with maturity and is larger in crises, despite being positive yet insignificant in the beginning of the crises.
Comparison of Realized Volatility Estimates

Monthly Profit and Loss of holding 1−Month Variance Swaps

Figure 7: Robustness Check

Note: On the upper panel, we compare the realized volatility estimated from the $A_0(2)$ model with the realized volatility estimated from 5 - minute returns of the SPY. On the lower panel, we plot the monthly realized profit and loss of holding a hypothetical 1-month variance swap contract each month.