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Probability theory/Calculus of variations

Expected Shortfall and optimal hedging payoff

Expected Shortfall *et* payoff *optimal de couverture*

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ABSTRACT

By using variational techniques, we provide an optimal payoff written on a given random variable for hedging – in the sense of minimizing the Expected Shortfall at a given threshold – a payoff written on another random variable. In numerous financially relevant examples, our result leads to optimal payoffs in closed form. From a theoretical viewpoint, our result is also useful for providing bounds to the classical Expected Shortfall minimization problem with given financial instruments.

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R É S U M É

En utilisant des techniques de calcul variationnel, nous obtenons un *payoff*, fonction d'une variable aléatoire fixée, permettant de couvrir optimalement – au sens de la minimisation de l'*Expected Shortfall* à un seuil donné – un *payoff* fonction d'une autre variable aléatoire. Dans de nombreux cas pertinents en finance, le résultat obtenu aboutit à des *payoffs* optimaux en formule fermée. Du point de vue théorique, le résultat obtenu fournit aussi des bornes pour le problème classique de la minimisation de l'*Expected Shortfall* avec des instruments financiers donnés.

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Version française abrégée

Considérons un espace mesurable (Ω, \mathcal{F}) muni d'une mesure de probabilité \mathbb{P} . Soient X et Y deux variables aléatoires définies sur Ω et à valeurs dans \mathbb{R}^d et \mathbb{R}^k respectivement. On suppose que X a une densité p_X sous \mathbb{P} et l'on note \mathcal{S}_X son support. On introduit une mesure de probabilités \mathbb{Q} absolument continue par rapport à \mathbb{P} et l'on note q_X la densité de X par rapport à \mathbb{Q} .

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Pour une fonction borélienne $h : \mathbb{R}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ telle que $h(Y) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})$ et un seuil d'Expected Shortfall $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ (voir Eq. (4) pour la définition de l'Expected Shortfall), le problème traité dans cet article est celui de la minimisation – en réalité trouver un minimiseur – de

$$g \in \mathfrak{F} \mapsto ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)), \quad (1)$$

où

$$\mathfrak{F} = \{g : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \text{ fonction borélienne} \mid g(X) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P}) \cap L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{Q}), \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}}[g(X)] = 0\}.$$

Ce problème est, en mathématiques financières, un problème de design optimal de *payoff* écrit sur X pour couvrir, au sens de la minimisation de l'Expected Shortfall, un *payoff* écrit sur Y . Il est intimement lié au problème plus classique de la couverture en Expected Shortfall (connu sous le nom de ES/CVaR-hedging), dans lequel les instruments de couverture sont, en revanche, fixés (voir [1] et [2] pour un résultat général d'existence et des méthodes numériques).

Le résultat général que nous obtenons stipule que le *payoff* optimal est relié à la *Value at Risk* sous la probabilité conditionnelle $\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X)$. Il est donné par le théorème suivant.

Théorème 0.1. *Supposons que*

- $h(Y)$ n'a pas d'atome sous $\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X = x)$ pour tout $x \in \mathcal{S}_X$,
- $\forall x \in \mathcal{S}_X, \alpha(x) := 1 - (1 - \alpha) \frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} > 0$, i.e. $\frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} < \frac{1}{1-\alpha}$,
- $VaR_{\alpha(x)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X)}(h(Y)) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})$.

Soit $g \in \mathfrak{F}$ définie par

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} VaR_{\alpha(x)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X=x)}(h(Y)) - t^*, & \text{si } x \in \mathcal{S}_X \\ 0, & \text{si } x \notin \mathcal{S}_X, \end{cases}$$

où

$$t^* = \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[VaR_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X)}(h(Y)) \right]. \quad (2)$$

On a $\forall \tilde{g} \in \mathfrak{F}$,

$$ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)) \leq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - \tilde{g}(X)).$$

Dans le cas particulier où Y est à valeurs réelles et h croissant (le cas décroissant se traite aussi aisément), on a un résultat particulier donné par le corollaire suivant.

Corollaire 0.2. *Supposons que*

- Y est à valeurs réelles (i.e. $k = 1$) et n'a pas d'atome sous $\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X = x)$ pour tout $x \in \mathcal{S}_X$,
- $\forall x \in \mathcal{S}_X, \alpha(x) := 1 - (1 - \alpha) \frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} > 0$, i.e. $\frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} < \frac{1}{1-\alpha}$,
- h est croissant (pas nécessairement strictement) et $h(VaR_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X)}(Y)) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})$.

Soit $g \in \mathfrak{F}$ définie par

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} h(VaR_{\alpha(x)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X=x)}(Y)) - \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[h(VaR_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot | X)}(Y)) \right], & \text{si } x \in \mathcal{S}_X \\ 0, & \text{si } x \notin \mathcal{S}_X. \end{cases}$$

On a $\forall \tilde{g} \in \mathfrak{F}$,

$$ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)) \leq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - \tilde{g}(X)).$$

Ce résultat permet d'obtenir des formules explicites pour le *payoff* optimal de couverture dans des cas très généraux, par exemple des distributions marginales presque quelconques pour X et Y et une structure de dépendance de type copule Student (voir Eq. (9)) – ce cas contient en particulier le cas des vecteurs Student (voir Eq. (10)) et des vecteurs gaussiens (voir Eq. (11)).

1. Introduction

1.1. General notations and definitions

Let us consider a measurable space (Ω, \mathcal{F}) equipped with a reference probability measure \mathbb{P} . All random variables are assumed to be defined on (Ω, \mathcal{F}) . For $d \in \mathbb{N}^*$, we denote by $L_d^0(\Omega) := L^0(\Omega, \mathcal{F}; \mathbb{R}^d)$ the set of \mathbb{R}^d -valued random variables. For any probability measure $\widehat{\mathbb{P}}$ on (Ω, \mathcal{F}) , we also define $L^1(\Omega, \widehat{\mathbb{P}}) = \{Z \in L_1^0(\Omega), \mathbb{E}^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}} [|Z|] < +\infty\}$.

We recall below the concepts of Value at Risk (VaR) and Expected Shortfall (ES). For that purpose, we consider a probability measure $\widehat{\mathbb{P}}$ on (Ω, \mathcal{F}) and a threshold $\alpha \in (0, 1)$.

- For any $Z \in L_1^0(\Omega)$, we define the α - $\widehat{\mathbb{P}}$ -quantile, or $\widehat{\mathbb{P}}$ -VaR at threshold α , of Z , by¹

$$\text{VaR}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z) = \inf \{t \in \mathbb{R} \mid \widehat{\mathbb{P}}(Z \leq t) \geq \alpha\}. \tag{3}$$

Remark 1. The infimum in the above definition is attained because $t \mapsto \widehat{\mathbb{P}}(Z \leq t)$ is nondecreasing and right-continuous.

- For any $Z \in L^1(\Omega, \widehat{\mathbb{P}})$, we define the $\widehat{\mathbb{P}}$ -Expected Shortfall at threshold α of Z by

$$\text{ES}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z) = \mathbb{E}^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}[Z_\alpha], \tag{4}$$

where Z_α is a random variable with cumulative distribution function

$$t \mapsto \begin{cases} 0, & \text{if } t < \text{VaR}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z), \\ \frac{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}(Z \leq t) - \alpha}{1 - \alpha}, & \text{if } t \geq \text{VaR}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z). \end{cases}$$

Remark 2. If $\widehat{\mathbb{P}}(Z = \text{VaR}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z)) = 0$ (no atom at $\text{VaR}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z)$ under $\widehat{\mathbb{P}}$), then (see [5] for a proof)

$$\text{ES}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z) = \mathbb{E}^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}[Z \mid Z \geq \text{VaR}_\alpha^{\widehat{\mathbb{P}}}(Z)].$$

1.2. The problem

We introduce two random variables $X \in L_d^0(\Omega)$ and $Y \in L_k^0(\Omega)$ ($d, k \in \mathbb{N}^*$). We assume that X has a density p_X under the probability measure \mathbb{P} , and we denote by S_X its support. We also introduce a probability measure \mathbb{Q} absolutely continuous with respect to \mathbb{P} and we denote by q_X the density of X under \mathbb{Q} .

We introduce a Borelian function $h : \mathbb{R}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ such that $h(Y) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})$. The problem addressed in this paper is the minimization (in fact finding a minimizer if there is one), for a given $\alpha \in (0, 1)$, of

$$g \in \mathfrak{F} \mapsto \text{ES}_\alpha^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)), \tag{5}$$

where

$$\mathfrak{F} = \{g : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \text{ Borelian function} \mid g(X) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P}) \cap L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{Q}), \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}}[g(X)] = 0\}.$$

In what follows, we shall assume that either Y or $h(Y)$ satisfies the (H) hypothesis, where a random variable satisfies the (H) hypothesis if it has no atom under the probability measures $\mathbb{P}(\cdot \mid X = x)$ for all $x \in S_X$.

In mathematical finance, this problem corresponds to finding the optimal payoff $g(X)$ (written on the asset(s) modeled by X), for statically hedging, in the sense of minimizing the Expected Shortfall at threshold α , a short position in the payoff $h(Y)$ (written on the asset(s) modeled by Y), where \mathbb{Q} is the pricing probability measure used by the market. In particular, the (H) hypothesis states that the assets modeled by X and Y are (really) different: X typically corresponds to tradable assets, while Y corresponds to non-tradable assets.

This problem is related to the classical problem of ES-hedging (better known as CVaR-hedging) in which, unlike in our case, the hedging instruments are given. A complete proof of the existence of an optimal ES/CVaR-hedging strategy, in both static and dynamic settings, is given in [2] with applications to the hedging of energy derivatives. Interesting numerical methods involving stochastic algorithms and quantization have also been proposed for solving this problem (see [1] and [2]).²

Remark 3. We restrict the minimization problem to payoffs with price 0, as we can always subtract from a payoff its expected value under \mathbb{Q} without changing the Expected Shortfall of the resulting portfolio.

¹ In our definitions of Value at Risk and Expected Shortfall, Z stands for a loss.

² In [3], Frikha partially extends some of these results to more general risk measures.

2. Optimal payoff

2.1. General result

We start with a general theorem:

Theorem 2.1. Assume that

- $h(Y)$ satisfies the (H) hypothesis,
- $\forall x \in \mathcal{S}_X, \alpha(x) := 1 - (1 - \alpha) \frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} > 0$, i.e. $\frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} < \frac{1}{1-\alpha}$,
- $\text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(h(Y)) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})$.

Let us define $g \in \mathfrak{F}$ by

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} \text{VaR}_{\alpha(x)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X=x)}(h(Y)) - t^*, & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{S}_X \\ 0, & \text{if } x \notin \mathcal{S}_X, \end{cases}$$

where

$$t^* = \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[\text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(h(Y)) \right]. \quad (6)$$

Then, we have $\forall \tilde{g} \in \mathfrak{F}$,

$$ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)) \leq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - \tilde{g}(X)).$$

Proof. The proof is based on the variational characterization of Rockafellar and Uryasev (see [4] and [5]):

$$\forall Z \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P}), \quad ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(Z) = \min_t \left(t + \frac{1}{1-\alpha} \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}}[(Z - t)_+] \right).$$

For any $\tilde{g} \in \mathfrak{F}$, we define the convex function

$$\mathfrak{S}^{\tilde{g}} : (t, \theta) \in \mathbb{R} \times [0, 1] \mapsto t + \frac{1}{1-\alpha} \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}}[(h(Y) - (\theta \tilde{g}(X) + (1-\theta)g(X)) - t)_+].$$

It is straightforward to verify that

$$\begin{aligned} & (h(Y) - (\theta \tilde{g}(X) + (1-\theta)g(X)) - t)_+ \\ & \geq (h(Y) - g(X) - t^*)_+ - (t - t^*) \mathbf{1}_{h(Y) - g(X) \geq t^*} - \theta (\tilde{g}(X) - g(X)) \mathbf{1}_{h(Y) - g(X) \geq t^*}. \end{aligned}$$

By taking expectations and reorganizing the terms, we obtain:

$$\mathfrak{S}^{\tilde{g}}(t, \theta) \geq \mathfrak{S}^{\tilde{g}}(t^*, 0) + (t - t^*) \left(1 - \frac{1}{1-\alpha} \mathbb{P}(h(Y) - g(X) \geq t^*) \right) - \frac{\theta}{1-\alpha} \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}}[(\tilde{g}(X) - g(X)) \mathbf{1}_{h(Y) - g(X) \geq t^*}]. \quad (7)$$

By definition of g and t^* , because $h(Y)$ satisfies the (H) hypothesis, we have:

$$\mathbb{P}(h(Y) - g(X) \geq t^* | X) = \mathbb{P} \left(h(Y) \geq \text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(h(Y)) \mid X \right) = 1 - \alpha(X) = (1 - \alpha) \frac{q_X(X)}{p_X(X)}.$$

Therefore,

$$\mathbb{P}(h(Y) - g(X) \geq t^*) = (1 - \alpha)$$

and

$$\mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}}[(\tilde{g}(X) - g(X)) \mathbf{1}_{h(Y) - g(X) \geq t^*}] = \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[(\tilde{g}(X) - g(X)) (1 - \alpha) \frac{q_X(X)}{p_X(X)} \right] = (1 - \alpha) \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}}[\tilde{g}(X) - g(X)] = 0.$$

Eq. (7) states therefore that $\mathfrak{S}^{\tilde{g}}(t, \theta) \geq \mathfrak{S}^{\tilde{g}}(t^*, 0)$. By taking $\theta = 1$, we obtain the result:

$$ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - \tilde{g}(X)) = \min_t \mathfrak{S}^{\tilde{g}}(t, 1) \geq \mathfrak{S}^{\tilde{g}}(t^*, 0) \geq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)). \quad \square$$

2.2. Special result in the one-dimensional case

In the case where Y is real-valued (i.e. $k = 1$), if h is a continuous and increasing function,³ the assumption that $h(Y)$ satisfies (H) in Theorem 2.1, can be replaced by that of Y satisfying (H). Furthermore, in that case, Eq. (6) writes:

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} h\left(\text{VaR}_{\alpha(x)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X=x)}(Y)\right) - \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}}\left[h\left(\text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(Y)\right)\right], & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{S}_X \\ 0, & \text{if } x \notin \mathcal{S}_X. \end{cases} \tag{8}$$

The strict monotonicity assumption for obtaining Eq. (8) can in fact be relaxed by using approximation techniques. This leads to the following corollary.

Corollary 2.2. Assume that

- Y is real-valued (i.e. $k = 1$) and satisfies the (H) hypothesis,
- $\forall x \in \mathcal{S}_X, \alpha(x) := 1 - (1 - \alpha) \frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} > 0$, i.e. $\frac{q_X(x)}{p_X(x)} < \frac{1}{1-\alpha}$,
- h is nondecreasing and $h\left(\text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(Y)\right) \in L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})$.

Let us define $g \in \mathfrak{F}$ by

$$g(x) = \begin{cases} h\left(\text{VaR}_{\alpha(x)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X=x)}(Y)\right) - \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}}\left[h\left(\text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(Y)\right)\right], & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{S}_X \\ 0, & \text{if } x \notin \mathcal{S}_X. \end{cases}$$

We have $\forall \tilde{g} \in \mathfrak{F}$,

$$ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)) \leq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - \tilde{g}(X)).$$

Proof. Let us introduce a sequence of increasing functions $(h_n)_n$ by $h_n(y) = h(y) + \frac{1}{(n+1)\pi} \arctan(y)$. It approximates h in the sense that $\|h_n - h\|_{\infty} = \frac{1}{n+1} \rightarrow_{n \rightarrow +\infty} 0$. By Theorem 2.1 and Eq. (8), we know that if we define $g_n \in \mathfrak{F}$ by

$$g_n(x) = \begin{cases} h_n\left(\text{VaR}_{\alpha(x)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X=x)}(Y)\right) - \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}}\left[h_n\left(\text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(Y)\right)\right], & \text{if } x \in \mathcal{S}_X \\ 0, & \text{if } x \notin \mathcal{S}_X, \end{cases}$$

then we have $\|g_n - g\|_{\infty} = \frac{2}{n+1} \rightarrow_{n \rightarrow +\infty} 0$ and $\forall \tilde{g} \in \mathfrak{F}$,

$$\begin{aligned} & ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - g(X)) \\ & \leq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - h_n(Y)) + ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h_n(Y) - g_n(X)) + ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(g_n(X) - g(X)) \\ & \leq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - h_n(Y)) + ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h_n(Y) - \tilde{g}(X)) + ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(g_n(X) - g(X)) \\ & \leq ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - h_n(Y)) + ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h_n(Y) - h(Y)) + ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(h(Y) - \tilde{g}(X)) + ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}(g_n(X) - g(X)). \end{aligned}$$

The result is then obtained by taking the limit $n \rightarrow +\infty$ since $ES_{\alpha}^{\mathbb{P}}$ is $\frac{1}{1-\alpha}$ -Lipschitz with respect to the L^1 norm and since, we have $h_n(Y) \xrightarrow[n \rightarrow +\infty]{L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})} h(Y)$ and $g_n(X) \xrightarrow[n \rightarrow +\infty]{L^1(\Omega, \mathbb{P})} g(X)$. \square

2.3. Comments and examples

Theorem 2.1 states that for finding a function g that minimizes (5), one simply needs to compute conditional quantiles (this is a classical problem in statistics, at least when $p_X = q_X$, usually solved numerically through quantile regressions on a basis of splines). Interestingly, thanks to Corollary 2.2, the problem can in fact be solved analytically in numerous cases of interest in finance. If, under \mathbb{P} , the cumulative distribution functions of X and Y are respectively F_X and F_Y , both assumed to be continuous and strictly increasing, and if the dependence structure of (X, Y) is that of a Student copula with “correlation” parameter ρ , and degree of freedom $\nu > 1$, then⁴

$$\text{VaR}_{\alpha(X)}^{\mathbb{P}(\cdot|X)}(Y) = F_Y^{-1}\left(t_{\nu}\left(\rho t_{\nu}^{-1}(F_X(X)) + \sqrt{1 - \rho^2} \sqrt{\frac{\nu + t_{\nu}^{-1}(F_X(X))^2}{\nu + 1}} t_{\nu+1}^{-1}(\alpha(X))\right)\right), \tag{9}$$

³ Similar results can be obtained for decreasing functions. The only difference is a change in the threshold in the Value at Risk from $\alpha(X)$ to $1 - \alpha(X)$.

⁴ We implicitly assume that $\alpha(x) > 0, \forall x \in \mathbb{R}$.

where t_r is the cumulative distribution function of a standard Student variable with r degrees of freedom. In particular, if (X, Y) is a Student vector $t\left(\begin{pmatrix} \mu_X \\ \mu_Y \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} \sigma_X^2 & \rho\sigma_X\sigma_Y \\ \rho\sigma_X\sigma_Y & \sigma_Y^2 \end{pmatrix}, \nu\right)$, and if $p_X = q_X$, then the optimal payoff $g(X)$ for hedging a call with strike K on Y is (up to an additive constant) equal to:

$$\left(\mu_Y + \rho \frac{\sigma_Y}{\sigma_X} (X - \mu_X) + \sqrt{1 - \rho^2} \sigma_Y \sqrt{\frac{\nu + \frac{(X - \mu_X)^2}{\sigma_X^2}}{\nu + 1}} t_{\nu+1}^{-1}(\alpha) - K \right)_+ \quad (10)$$

Interestingly, Eq. (10) simplifies to

$$\left(\mu_Y + \rho \frac{\sigma_Y}{\sigma_X} (X - \mu_X) + \sqrt{1 - \rho^2} \sigma_Y N^{-1}(\alpha) - K \right)_+, \quad (11)$$

where N is the cumulative distribution functions of a standard Gaussian distribution, in the limit case $\nu \rightarrow +\infty$ corresponding to a Gaussian vector (X, Y) . If $\rho > 0$, then this corresponds to the payoff associated with $\rho \frac{\sigma_Y}{\sigma_X}$ calls on X , with strike $K_X = \mu_X + \frac{K - \mu_Y - \sqrt{1 - \rho^2} \sigma_Y N^{-1}(\alpha)}{\rho \frac{\sigma_Y}{\sigma_X}}$.

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