Pricing of Asian-type and Basket Options via Upper and Lower Bounds

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Abstract. This paper sets out to provide a general framework for the pricing of average-type options via lower and upper bounds. This class of options includes Asian, basket and options on the volume-weighted average price. We demonstrate that in cases under discussion lower bounds allow for the dimensionality of the problem to be reduced and that these methods provide reasonable approximations to the price of the option.

Keywords: Asian options, Basket options, Lower and Upper bounds, Volume-weighted average prices (VWAP), Levy processes.

1. Introduction. The problem of pricing and hedging Asian-type and basket exotic options, for more than two underlying assets, has attracted the considerable attention of many researchers, primarily due to the increasing demand from practitioners for the development of fast, accurate and stable numerical procedures suitable for the calculation of prices of path-dependent options. We believe that methods based on exact lower and upper bounds meet these requirements. One of the first developments in this direction for arithmetic Asian call options under geometric Brownian motion (gBm) was obtained in 1994 by Curran [9]. The method and corresponding numerical procedure remains widely popular among industry practitioners to this day. Since 1994 there have been many further advances, successively leading to more accurate bounds under more complex models for the underlying asset, such as geometric Levy processes (gLp), stochastic volatility (SV) and others (see e.g. recent papers [19], [6] and references therein). Typically, upper and lower
bounds obtained in these papers have sufficient accuracy to allow them to be used as approximations for option prices and their sensitivities to parameters. Contrary to traditional approaches, which are usually based on finite-difference schemes for solving related partial differential equations (PDEs), the upper and lower bounds can also be calculated for high-dimensional problems, within reasonable computational time, while PDE methods may be unsuitable.

In this paper we provide some extensions to the results on lower and upper bounds obtained in [18] and demonstrate their applicability to problems recently discussed in the literature. In Section 3 we discuss the problem of pricing options on volume-weighted average prices (VWAPs, see related papers [24], [19], [6]) and develop a new model for the volume process which is a natural generalisation of the ”Gamma-volume model” suggested in [6].

In Section 4 we deal with the prices and sensitivities of Asian options under a geometric Levy process framework. This problem has been approached by many authors (see e.g. [1], [11], [16], [4]). Here for some special classes of Levy processes we present some new theoretical results and their numerical implementation based on the use of Fourier methods.

In Section 5 we suggest a new lower bound for prices of multidimensional baskets and provide comparisons with recent results obtained in [15].

2. Notation. A unified approach to deriving lower and upper bounds.

We assume that the prices of underlying assets $S_t = (S_t^{(1)}, ..., S_t^{(M)})$, $t \leq T$, are defined on the filtered probability space $(\Omega, \mathcal{F}, \{\mathcal{F}_t\}_{t \geq 0}, \mathbb{P})$, with $T$ the maturity time of European-type options. We also assume that the process $e^{-R_t}S_t$ is a martingale with respect to the (risk-neutral) probability measure $\mathbb{P}$ and that $R_t$ is the accrued interest at time $t$. These are standard assumptions in mathematical finance which are implied by the no-arbitrage hypothesis under a no-dividend setting (see e.g. [23] concerning other details of this approach). This may be easily extended to the case where dividends are paid.

We aim to obtain accurate bounds for prices of Asian-type and basket options which, in a most general form, can be written as

$$C_T = \mathbb{E}e^{-R_T}\left(\int_0^T (Y_u - K)\mu(du)\right)^+, \quad (1)$$

where $x^+ = \max[x, 0]$, $K$ is a constant ("strike"), $Y = (Y_u, 0 \leq u \leq T)$ is a random process adapted to the filtration and $\mu(u)$ is a (generally speaking) random distribution on $[0, T]$. As examples, one may consider the following financial options which occur often in practice. By taking
\[ Y_u = \sum_{i=1}^{N} w_i S_u^{(i)}, \text{ with } w = (w_i, i = 1, ..., N) \text{ a given vector of weights} \]

and concentrating \( \mu(u) \) at the point \( u = T \), we obtain the price of a standard basket-call option

\[ C_T = \mathbb{E} e^{-R_T} \left( \sum_{i=1}^{N} w_i S_T^{(i)} - K \right)^+; \]  

by setting \( \mu(du) = du/T \), we obtain the price of a continuously-monitored (CMO) Asian basket call; by taking \( \mu(du) = dV_u/V_T \) with \( V_u \) the accumulated total traded volume at the moment \( u \), we obtain the case of options on the volume-weighted average price (VWAP). The notation can also accommodate the case of discretely monitored options (DMO) on VWAP:

\[ C_T = \mathbb{E} e^{-R_T} \left( \sum_{t \leq T} S_{t_j} U_{t_j} \right) - K \]  

where \( U_{t_j} \) is the traded volume at the moment \( t_j \).

We also use the following convenient notation

\[ \langle H, \mu \rangle := \int_0^T H_u \mu(du), \ H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu, \]  

where we suppose that the integral is well defined (e.g. \( \mathcal{H}^\mu := L^1(\Omega \times [0, T], \mathbb{F} \otimes \mathbb{B}[0, T], d\mathbb{P} \times d\mu) \)).

Using this notation we can rewrite (1) in the more compact form:

\[ C_T = \max_{z \in \mathbb{R}, Y \in \mathcal{H}^\mu, H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu} \{ \mathbb{E} e^{-R_T} \langle Y - K, \mu \rangle \} \]

where both the maximum and the minimum are attained by taking \( z = K, H = Y \).

These relations can be used for obtaining lower and upper bounds for \( C_T \) by choosing a suitable random variable \( H \) (we call it a "proxy", see examples below).

\[ \]  

\[ 5 \]This notation was suggested by a reviewer
There exist many other similar relations, e.g. with arbitrary random variables $X$ in (5) instead of $\langle H, \mu \rangle$ but we would like to stress here that the maximum and the minimum in Proposition 1 are both attained by setting $H = Y$. To some extent relation (6) resembles one of the famous dual representations for American options suggested by L. C. G. Rogers [21].

For completeness of the exposition we provide the proof of Proposition 1.

Proof. For any $z \in \mathbb{R}$ and $H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu$

$$\langle Y - K, \mu \rangle^+ \geq \langle Y - K, \mu \rangle \mathbb{I}\{\langle H, \mu \rangle > z\}.$$ 

Thus we obtain

$$C_T = \mathbb{E}e^{-R_T} \langle Y - K, \mu \rangle^+ \geq \sup_{z \in \mathbb{R}, H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu} \{\mathbb{E}e^{-R_T} \langle Y - K, \mu \rangle \mathbb{I}\{\langle H, \mu \rangle > z\}\}.$$ 

Since $\langle Y - K, \mu \rangle^+ = \langle Y - K, \mu \rangle \mathbb{I}\{\langle Y, \mu \rangle > K\}$, the equality in (5) is attained when $z = K$ and $H = Y$

To prove (6) we note that for any $H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu$

$$\langle Y - K, \mu \rangle^+ = \langle Y - K + \langle H, \mu \rangle - H, \mu \rangle^+ \leq \langle (Y - K + \langle H, \mu \rangle - H)^+, \mu \rangle,$$

where the last inequality is due to convexity of the function $x^+$. This implies that

$$C_T \leq \inf_{H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu} \{\mathbb{E}e^{-R_T} \langle (Y - K + \langle H, \mu \rangle - H)^+, \mu \rangle\}.$$ 

Note that when $H = Y$ we have

$$\mathbb{E} \langle Y - K + \langle H, \mu \rangle - Y, \mu \rangle^+ = \mathbb{E}(\langle Y, \mu \rangle - K)^+ = C_T.$$ 

Hence the minimum in (6) is achieved when $H = Y$ and (4) does indeed hold. Thus the proof of Proposition 1 has been completed.

For the remainder of the paper we shall consider only the case where $R_t = rt$ with $r$ a constant. The case of time-dependent deterministic interest rates can be easily adapted to our framework (see related examples in [18]).

Due to (5) from Proposition 1 we have that for any $H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu$

$$C_T \geq LB := \sup_{z \in \mathbb{R}} \{\mathbb{E}e^{-rT} \langle Y - K, \mu \rangle \mathbb{I}\{\langle H, \mu \rangle > z\}\}.$$ 

The evaluation of the lower bound $LB$ is typically much simpler than that of the true price $C_T$ due to the fact that (8) does not contain the
non-linear function $x^+$. As a result, one may note that for the evaluation of LB we need only the joint distribution of $\ln(Y_t)$ and $\langle H, \mu \rangle$, see examples in Sections 3, 4 and 5.

By (6) from Proposition 1 we have for any $H \in \mathcal{H}^\mu$ and any $a \in \mathbb{R}$

$$C_T \leq e^{-rT} \mathbb{E} \left\langle (Y - K + a \langle H, \mu \rangle - aH)^+, \mu \right\rangle$$

and hence

$$C_T \leq UB := e^{-rT} \inf_{a \in \mathbb{R}} \{ \mathbb{E} \left\langle (Y - K + a \langle H, \mu \rangle - aH)^+, \mu \right\rangle \}. \quad (9)$$

The evaluation of $UB$ is easier when compared to that of $C_T$ but it is typically more time consuming than the evaluation of the LB (8) because it does involve the non-linear function $x^+$.

A discussion concerning reasonable choices of the proxy random process $H^*$ in (8) and (9) as it relates to the production of accurate bounds is presented in [18]. We would like to remind readers that the maximum and the minimum in Proposition 1 are both attained by setting $H = Y$ and, therefore, one could expect that if we have a "good" approximation $H^*$ for $Y$ (i.e. leading to accurate LB in (8)) then choosing the same proxy $H^*$ in (9) will produce a "good" UB in (9). This consideration is often supported by comparisons with results of Monte Carlo simulations (see e.g. [18], [4]) but, of course, it would be desirable to have an analytical estimate of the distance between $UB$ and $LB$. In most examples the accuracy of LB, when compared with Monte Carlo simulation, is so good that such LBs can even be used to approximate sensitivities (Greeks) via numerical differentiation (see examples in Section 4).

3. Lower bound for options on VWAP under Levy-volume model.

In this Section we discuss only the one-dimensional case and set $Y = S = (S_t, 0 \leq t \leq T)$. We shall assume that the process $S$ and the accumulated traded volume $V = (V_t, 0 \leq t \leq T)$ are independent.

3.1 Levy-volume model. In [19] we applied the method of matching moments and log-normal approximation for $\int_0^T S_u dV_u$ under the assumptions that $S$ is a geometric Brownian motion (gBm) and that the accumulated volume process $V$ is the integral of a squared Ornstein-Uhlenbeck $U = (U_t, 0 \leq t \leq T) \ V_t = \int_0^t U_u^2 du$.

The key point of our approach in [19] was the development of a technique for finding the function

$$g = \left( g_t := \mathbb{E} \frac{U_t^2}{V_T}, \ t \leq T \right).$$
The method of finding $g$ proposed in [19], is based on the formula

$$g_t = - \int_0^\infty \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \left[ \mathbb{E} e^{-zU^2 - qV_T} \right]_{z=0} dq,$$

(10)

which, as a matter of fact, holds for any random variable $U_t$ and any positive random variable $V_t$. Relation (10) leads to analytical representations for moments of VWAP and bounds for $C_T$ (see details in [17], [18], [19]).

Here we discuss another model, that we call a Levy-volume model, which is a generalisation of the Gamma-volume model suggested by Buryak and Guo [6]. The basic assumption of our model is that the increments of accumulated trading volume are increments of a Levy subordinator $V = (V_t, t \leq T)$, i.e. a process $V_t$ with independent and stationary increments, $V_0 = 0$, $\mathbb{P}(V_t > 0) = 1$ for $t > 0$. Under this model for any trading moments $t_j$ and $t_{j-1}$ we define increments of trading volumes as follows:

$$U_{t_j} := V_{t_j} - V_{t_{j-1}}, \ 0 = t_0 < t_1 < ... < t_N = T.$$ 

Note that in [6] it was assumed that $V_t$ is a Gamma-process with a marginal gamma-density function

$$\mathbb{P}(V_t \in dx) = \beta(\beta x)^{\alpha t - 1} e^{-\beta x} dx / \Gamma(\alpha t), \ \alpha > 0, \ \beta > 0, \ t > 0, \ x > 0.$$ 

(11)

We stress here that, contrary to the model with a squared Ornstein-Uhlenbeck process in [19] and [17], the accumulated Levy-volume process $V_t$ has independent increments and, apparently, this leads to a simplification of the calculation of lower bounds for DMO and CMO on VWAP options.

In the CMO version of the Levy-volume model it is natural to set

$$\mu(du) = \frac{dV_u}{V_T}, \ 0 \leq u \leq T,$$

and in the DMO version we shall assume that $\mu(u)$ has atoms at trading times $\{t_j, j = 1, ..., N\}$ and hence use (3) for finding $C_T$.

For further calculations the following simple fact plays an important role.

**Proposition 2.** Let $V_t$ be a subordinator. Then

$$f(u) := \mathbb{E} \frac{V_u}{V_T} = \frac{u}{T}, \ u \leq T.$$ 

(12)
The proof of this fact is elementary when \( u/T = i/N \) is a rational number. Indeed, we can then write \( V_u = \sum_{j=1}^{i} \xi_j \), where random variables \( \xi_j := V_{jT/N} - V_{(j-1)T/N} \) are independent and identically distributed. Since by distribution \( (\xi_j, V_T) = (\xi_1, V_T) \) we have

\[
E\frac{V_u}{V_T} = \sum_{j=1}^{i} E\frac{\xi_j}{V_T} = iE\frac{\xi_1}{V_T}, \quad i = 1, 2, \ldots, N.
\]

This implies when \( i = N \) that \( N E(\xi_1/V_T) = 1 \) and therefore \( iE(\xi_1/V_T) = i/N = u/T \).

The case of arbitrary \( u \) and \( T \) can be treated with a limit procedure or with the help of formula (10) or with the following considerations. It is easy to see that \( f(u) := E(V_u/V_T) \) is a nondecreasing function, \( f(0) = 0 \), \( f(T) = 1 \) and for any \( u \in [0, T] \), \( s \in [0, T] \) such that \( u + s \in [0, T] \)

\[
f(u + s) = E\frac{V_u + V_{u+s} - V_u}{V_T} = f(u) + E\frac{V_{u+s} - V_u}{V_T} = f(u) + f(s),
\]

where the last equality is due to stationarity and independence of increments of \( V_t \). It is well known that the monotonic solution of the functional equation \( f(u + s) = f(u) + f(s) \) is a linear function, and since \( f(0) = 0 \), \( f(T) = 1 \) we have \( f(u) = u/T \).

### 3.2 Lower bounds

First we note that due to the convexity of the function \( x^+ \) and the assumption of independence of \( V \) and \( S_t \) (the dynamics of \( S_t \) have not yet been specified), we always have the lower bound of the form

\[
C_T := e^{-rT}E(S - K)^+ \geq e^{-rT}E(S - K, E\mu)^+
\]

where, due to Proposition 2 under the Levy-volume model, we have for the CMO case

\[
E\mu(du) = du/T.
\]

This means that we can obtain \( LBs \) for options on VWAP via \( LBs \) for ordinary Asian options.

We have already demonstrated how our technique works for deriving \( LBs \) of both CMO and DMO for Asian options under a Gaussian framework in [18], but for completeness of the exposition here we demonstrate some steps of this technique.

To allow for the comparison of results we assume further, as in [6], that \( S_t \) is a gBm process. Recall that under the risk-neutral measure we
have the representation

\[ S_t = S_0 \exp\{ (r - \frac{\sigma^2}{2}) t + \sigma B_t \}, \]

where \( B = (B_t, t \leq T) \) is a standard Brownian motion and \( \sigma \) is the volatility. (Note that a generalisation to the case of geometric Levy models can be carried out with a technique reported in Section 4 below).

For the CMO case we suggest to use \( \langle \ln(S), \mu \rangle \) as the proxy \( \langle H, \mu \rangle \) in (5). Under the assumptions listed above this leads to the following representation for \( LB \) in the CMO case:

\[
LB_C := e^{-rT} S_0 \sup_z \mathbb{E} \left( \int_0^T e^{(r-\frac{\sigma^2}{2})u + \sigma B_u} du - K \right) I\{ \int_0^T B_u \frac{du}{T} > z \}. \tag{13}
\]

Similarly, in the DMO case we use the proxy \( \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N B_{t_j} \) and thus we have

\[
LB_D := e^{-rT} S_0 \sup_z \left( \sum_{j=1}^N \mathbb{E} e^{(r-\frac{\sigma^2}{2})t_j + \sigma B_{t_j}} I\{ \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N B_{t_j} > z \} \right) t_j - t_{j-1} \tag{14}
- K \mathbb{P} \left( \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N B_{t_j} > z \right).
\]

The expressions (13) and (14) have already been discussed in [18] under a setting that includes general Gaussian processes. In particular, using the Girsanov transformation in the case of gBm we have managed to make further simplifications to (13) and obtained the following lower bound for the CMO case:

\[
LB_C = e^{-rT} \sup_z \left( \int_0^T S_0 e^{ru} \text{erfc} \left( \frac{z - \sigma u (1 - u/(2T))}{\sqrt{2T/3}} \right) \frac{du}{T} \right)
- K \text{erfc} \left( \frac{z}{\sqrt{2T/3}} \right),
\]

where \( \text{erfc}(x) := \frac{2}{\sqrt{\pi}} \int_x^\infty e^{-t^2} dt \) and \( x \in \mathbb{R} \). In the DMO case with \( t_i = iT/N \), (14) can be reduced to

\[
LB_D = \frac{e^{-rT}}{2T} \sup_z \left( \sum_{i=1}^N e^{rt_i} S_0 \text{erfc} \left( z - \sigma t_i \left( T - \frac{t_i}{2} + \frac{T}{2N} \right) \right) \right)
- K \text{erfc} \left( z(2D_N)^{-1/2} \right), \tag{15}
\]
where $D_N = \frac{T}{3}(1 + \frac{2}{3N} + \frac{1}{3N^2})$ (see [13]).

3.3 Numerical results. The following table presents values of the lower bounds $LB^D$ ([15]) and the log-normal approximations $LogNorm$ based on the approximation of variance for VWAP from ([6], equation (5.5)). Note that the value $3.0120^*$ is from ([6]), Table 3). We also provide Monte Carlo estimates ($MC$) based on $10^7$ trajectories for the case discussed in ([6]), i.e. for a Levy-volume model generated by a Gamma-process $V_t$ with parameters $\alpha = 10$, $\beta = 1$ in ([11]). Standard mean-square deviations of $MC$ estimates in Tables 1, 4 and 5 are denoted as $SE$.

As in ([6]) we set $S_0 = 100$, $K = 100$, $r = 0.05$, $N = 80$ and $T = 0.317$.

| $\sigma$ | $LB^D$ | $LogNorm$ | $MC$ | $SE$ error |
|----------|--------|-----------|------|------------|
| 0.2      | 3.0057 | 3.0120*   | 3.0056| 0.0013     |
| 0.4      | 5.5570 | 6.0170    | 5.5866| 0.0027     |
| 0.6      | 8.1130 | 8.5930    | 8.1542| 0.0042     |
| 0.8      | 10.6580| 11.1680   | 10.7190| 0.0059     |

The results from Table 1 confirm our observation made in [19], [18], [17] that the log-normal approximation is not accurate enough when values of $\sigma$ (volatilities) are relatively large. Meanwhile the relative errors for $LB^D$ are always less than 0.5%.

4. Asian options under Levy process framework.

In this Section we discuss only some examples of numerical evaluations of lower bounds for Asian options on a one-dimensional asset $S$. We shall assume that the process $S$ is modeled as a geometric Levy process.

4.1 Bounds for options with fixed strikes. Let $Z := (Z_t = \ln(S_t/S_0), \ 0 \leq t \leq T)$ and the interest rate $r$ be constant. Assuming in ([7]) $Y = S$ and using the proxy $H = Z$ we obtain the following formula for Asian options

$$C_T \geq LB^A := e^{-rT} \sup_{z \in \mathbb{R}} \mathbb{E} \langle S_0 e^Z - K, \mu \rangle \mathbb{I}\{\langle Z, \mu \rangle > z\}. \quad (16)$$

Similarly, using the proxy $H = aZ$, $a \in \mathbb{R}$ in ([6]) we have

$$C_T \leq UB^A := e^{-rT} \inf_{a \in \mathbb{R}} \mathbb{E} \langle (S_0 e^Z - K + a \langle Z, \mu \rangle - aZ)^+, \mu \rangle.$$

This upper bound has been investigated in [18] under the gBm framework. In this paper we shall consider several examples under the gLp
framework and find the lower bound $LB^A$ which is typically more accurate and simpler to calculate than $UB^A$.

4.2 Computing Lower bounds under the Levy process framework with Fourier transforms. We assume that $Z = (Z_t = \ln(S_t/S_0), 0 \leq t \leq T)$ is a Levy process. We also assume that the joint characteristic function of $Z_t$ and $\langle Z, \mu \rangle$

$$
\varphi(\xi, \zeta; t) := \mathbb{E}e^{i\xi Z_t + i\zeta \langle Z, \mu \rangle}
$$

is known in an explicit form (see examples below). We assume also that there exists the density function $f_{\langle Z, \mu \rangle}(z)$, calculated as the inverse Fourier transform of $\varphi(0, \zeta; T)$.

The lower bound $LB^A$ can be calculated in two steps. In the first step we find the value of $z = \hat{z}$ that gives the global maximum in (17); in the second step we use $\hat{z}$ to the maximum that is $LB^A$.

The equation for $\hat{z}$ can be found by the following way. Differentiating over $z$ the expression under the symbol sup in (16) and equating to zero we have

$$
\frac{d}{dz} \int_0^T \mathbb{E}e^{Z_u} \mathbb{I}\{\langle Z, \mu \rangle > z\} \mu(du) = \frac{K}{S_0} f_{\langle Z, \mu \rangle}(z).
$$

Then using Fourier techniques on the conditional expectation (in a similar way to [16]), and noting various symmetries in the integrand we obtain

$$
\frac{1}{\pi} \int_0^\infty \mathbb{R}(\varphi(-i, \zeta; u)e^{-i\zeta \hat{z}}) d\zeta \mu(du) = \frac{K}{S_0} f_{\langle Z, \mu \rangle}(\hat{z}).
$$

(17)

Having $\hat{z}$ the lower bound $LB^A$ can be reduced to the calculation of the following integral: for $\alpha_1 > 0$, $\alpha_2 < -1$ and $\beta < 0$

$$
LB^A := \frac{e^{-RT} S_0}{2\pi^2} \int_0^T \int_{-\infty}^\infty \int_{-\infty}^\infty \mathbb{R}(\hat{h}_1(\xi, \zeta; \hat{z}) \varphi(-\xi + i\alpha_1, -\zeta + i\beta; u) \hat{h}_2(\xi, \zeta; \hat{z}) \varphi(-\xi + i\alpha_2, -\zeta + i\beta; u)) d\xi d\zeta d\mu(du),
$$

(18)

where

$$
\hat{h}_1(\xi, \zeta; \hat{z}) = \left( \frac{K}{(\alpha_1 + i\xi)S_0} - \frac{1}{\alpha_1 + 1 + i\xi} \right) e^{(\beta + i\zeta)},
$$

$$
\hat{h}_2(\xi, \zeta; \hat{z}) = \left( \frac{1}{\alpha_2 + 1 + i\xi} - \frac{K}{(\alpha_2 + i\xi)S_0} \right) e^{(\beta + i\zeta)}.
$$

The derivation of (18) can be done in two steps. First using the relations (5) and (17) we obtain

$$
LB^A := e^{-RT} \mathbb{E} \langle S_0 e^Z - K, \mu \rangle \mathbb{I}\{\langle Z, \mu \rangle > \hat{z}\}
$$

$$
= e^{-RT} S_0 \int_0^T (\Psi_1(u; \hat{z}) + \Psi_2(u; \hat{z})) \mu(du),
$$

(19)
where
\[
\Psi_1(u; \zeta) := \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left( e^x - \frac{K}{S_0} \right) I\{x < 0, y > \zeta\} f(x, y; u) \, dx \, dy,
\]
\[
\Psi_2(u; \zeta) := \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \left( e^x - \frac{K}{S_0} \right) I\{x > 0, y > \zeta\} f(x, y; u) \, dx \, dy,
\]
and \( f(x, y; t) \) is the joint density of \((Z_t, (Z, \mu))\). Then for the second step we use the exponential-damp (see [5]) which leads to (18).

4.3 Numerical results. Tables 2 and 3 display the lower bounds and approximations for the sensitivity with respect to \(S_0\) ("Delta") respectively for a variety of processes (variance-gamma (VG), normal-inverse-Gaussian (NIG), Merton jump-diffusion (JD), see details in [4]). We assume \(S_0 = K = 100\), the monitoring points are equally-spaced, time \(T = 1\) is measured in years and \(N = \infty\) indicates a continuously-monitored option (CMO). The Monte Carlo estimates (MC) are based on \(10^7\) trajectories.

| X process | Type | \(T\) (years) | \(N\) | MC    | \(LB^A\) |
|-----------|------|---------------|------|-------|---------|
| VG        | Fixed| 1             | 10   | 6.2150| 6.2118  |
| NIG       | Fixed| 1             | 20   | 5.9855| 5.9770  |
| Merton    | Fixed| 1             | \(\infty\) | 5.7730| 5.7634  |

| X process | Type | \(T\) (years) | \(N\) | MC    | Delta |
|-----------|------|---------------|------|-------|-------|
| VG        | Fixed| 1             | 10   | 0.5943| 0.5943|
| NIG       | Fixed| 1             | 20   | 0.5914| 0.5914|
| Merton    | Fixed| 1             | \(\infty\) | 0.6084| 0.6082|

Comparison of the LB results to MC estimates shows that the lower bound is very accurate and for most purposes may be taken to be the actual price.

5. Lower bound for Baskets options
In this Section we assume that \(S = (S^{(i)}_t; i = 1, ...N; 0 \leq t \leq T)\) is a multidimensional gBm and \(R_t = rT\).

5.1 Kirk’s type approximation for basket-spread option. A basket-spread option price for \(N\) assets is defined by the formula
\[
C_T = \mathbb{E} \left( e^{-rT} \sum_{i=1}^{M} S^{(i)}_{T} - e^{-rT} \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} S^{(i)}_{T} - e^{-rT} K \right)^+,
\]
which is a particular case of (1).

The first analytical formula for $C_T$ was obtained in [14] for the two-asset exchange option with $M = 1$, $N = 2$ and $K = 0$ under gBm by making a reduction to the Black-Scholes formula (Margrabe’s formula). As with Asian options, it is not yet possible to obtain an exact solution for this option under the Black-Scholes framework when $N \geq 2$ and $K > 0$, due to the fact that a linear combination of log-normal random variables still has a non-identifiable distribution. These options are traded in a variety of markets and are useful for hedging portfolios of long and short positions in underlying assets (see [7]).

A number of different approaches to approximate the basket pricing problem are found in the literature and they may be classed as numerical, closed-form or semi-closed-form (see e.g. [13]). A popular closed-form approximation was described in [12] (Kirk’s approximation).

Of particular interest is the recent paper by Lau and Lo [15] which extends Kirk’s approximation to multi-asset baskets of $N > 2$. We now briefly describe their extension of Kirk’s method.

Note that under the risk-neutral measure $\mathbb{P}$ the price of the option is given by

$$F_t = e^{-rt} \sum_{i=1}^{M} S_t^{(i)}$$

and

$$P_t = e^{-rt} \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} S_t^{(i)} + e^{-rT}K.$$

Since $S_t^{(i)}$ are gBm the dynamics of $F_t$ and $P_t$ are given by

$$dF_t = \sum_{i=1}^{M} \sigma_i S_t^{(i)} dB_t^{(i)} = F_t \sum_{i=1}^{M} \sigma_i \frac{S_t^{(i)}}{F_t} dB_t^{(i)}, \quad F_0 = \sum_{i=1}^{M} S_0^{(i)},$$

$$dP_t = \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} \sigma_i S_t^{(i)} dB_t^{(i)} = P_t \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} \sigma_i \frac{S_t^{(i)}}{P_t} dB_t^{(i)}, \quad P_0 = \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} S_0^{(i)} + e^{-rT}K,$$

where $\sigma_i$ are the volatilities of $S_t^{(i)}$ and $B_t^{(i)}$ are correlated standard Brownian motions with correlation coefficients

$$\rho_{ij} = E(B_t^{(i)} B_t^{(j)}).$$

Kirk’s approximation, and its extension to the multi-dimensional case in [15], are based on an approximation of $(S_t^{(i)}/F_t, S_t^{(i)}/P_t)$ for $0 \leq t \leq T$ by
corresponding constants \((S_0^{(i)}/F_0, S_0^{(i)}/P_0)\), so \(F_t\) is then approximated by the process \(\tilde{F}_t\) with dynamics
\[
d\tilde{F}_t = \tilde{F}_t \sum_{i=1}^{M} \tilde{\sigma}_i dB_t^{(i)}, \quad \tilde{\sigma}_i = \sigma_i \frac{S_0^{(i)}}{F_0}.
\]
Similarly we may approximate \(P_t\) by \(\hat{P}_t\) with dynamics
\[
d\hat{P}_t = \hat{P}_t \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} \hat{\sigma}_i dB_t^{(i)}, \quad \hat{\sigma}_i = \sigma_i \frac{S_0^{(i)}}{P_0 + e^{-rT}K}.
\]
Using \(\tilde{F}_T\) and \(\hat{P}_T\) the option price (20) is then approximated by
\[
E\left(\tilde{F}_T - \hat{P}_T\right)^+, \tag{21}
\]
which is precisely of the form for which Magrabe’s formula applies since \(\tilde{F}_T\) and \(\hat{P}_T\) are lognormal. As reported in [15], this heuristic method gives accurate results for a range of \(N\) and \(M\), however there are no analytical formulas for the accuracy of the approximations made so far.

5.2 Lower bounds. We now apply the methods described above in Section 2 to find a lower bound for the basket-spread option price. Using the random variable \(X_T := (\ln \tilde{F}_T - \ln \hat{P}_T)\) as our proxy in (8), we have the following lower bound
\[
LB^{BC} := \sup_{z \in \mathbb{R}} \left( - \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} e^{-rT} \mathbb{E}\{X_T > z\} S_T^{(i)} - \sum_{i=1}^{M} e^{-rT} \mathbb{E}\{X_T > z\} S_T^{(i)} + e^{-rT}K \mathbb{P}(X_T > z) \right).
\]
Next note that
\[
X_T = \sum_{i=1}^{M} \tilde{\sigma}_i B_T^{(i)} - \sum_{i=M+1}^{N} \hat{\sigma}_i B_T^{(i)} + \text{const}
\]
is normally distributed, so \(\mathbb{P}(X_T > z)\) is easy to compute for each \(z\). In order to evaluate the expectations \(\mathbb{E}\{X_T > z\} S_T^{(i)}\) in (22) observe that for every \(i \in \{1, \cdots, N\}\)
\[
\mathbb{E}\{X_T > z\} S_T^{(i)} = S_0^{(i)} \tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)}(X_T > z) \tag{23}
\]
where the measures \(\tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)}\) are defined via the Girsanov transformation with the Radon-Nikodym derivative
\[
\frac{d\tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)}}{d\mathbb{P}} = \exp \left\{ \sigma_i B_T^{(i)} - T \sigma_i^2 / 2 \right\}.
\]
It is known that the Girsanov transformation preserves covariances of Gaussian random processes (see e.g. [20], Proposition 2) and therefore we have
\[ \tilde{\mathbb{E}}^{(i)} \tilde{B}_t^{(i)} \tilde{B}_t^{(j)} = \rho_{ij}. \]

Observe also that under the measure \( \tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)} \)
\[ \{ \tilde{B}_t^{(j)} := B_t^{(j)} - \rho_{ij} \sigma_i t, 0 \leq t \leq T, j = 1, 2, \ldots, M \} \]
are standard Brownian motions. Thus we can easily find \( \tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)}(X_T > z) \) giving the lower bound
\[ LB_{BC} = e^{-rT} \sup_{z \in \mathbb{R}} \left( -\sum_{i=M+1}^{N} S_0^{(i)} \tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)}(X_T > z) - \sum_{i=1}^{M} S_0^{(i)} \tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)}(X_T > z) - K \mathbb{P}(X_T > z) \right), \]
where \( \tilde{\mathbb{P}}^{(i)}(X_T \leq z) \) and \( \mathbb{P}(X_T \leq z) \) are Gaussian distributions with known parameters.

5.3 Numerical results. The above considerations can be easily adapted to the case where each stock \( S_t^{(i)} \) has a constant dividend denoted \( q_i \); the formulas above still hold except we replace \( S_0^{(i)} e^{q_i T} \).

Tables 4 and 5 show results for 3 and 200 asset basket options with parameter values from [15] to allow for comparisons.

1) For the 3 asset case the parameters are \( N = 3, M = 0, T = 1, \sigma_{1/2/3} = 0.3, r = 0.05, S_0 = (60, 50, 40), q_{1/2/3} = 0.03, \rho_{12} = 0.7, \rho_{13} = 0.5 \) and \( \rho_{23} = 0.3 \);

2) The parameter values for the 200 asset case are \( N = 100, M = 50, T = 1, \sigma_{i \leq M} = 0.5, \sigma_{i > M} = 0.3, r = 0.05, S_{i \leq M} = 10, S_{i > M} = 9, q_{i \leq M} = 0.05, q_{i > M} = 0.03, \rho_{i \leq M \cap j \leq M} = 0.6, \rho_{i \leq M \cap j > M} = 0.4 \) and \( \rho_{i \leq M \cap j > M} = 0.5 \).

Table 4: Results for 3 asset basket for varying strike \( K \)

| \( K \) | \( LB_{BC} \) | Lau & Lo | MC | SE |
|-------|---------|---------|---|---|
| 50.0  | 98.0054 | 98.0054 | 98.0235 | 0.0116 |
| 100.0 | 50.9571 | 50.9654 | 50.968 | 0.0114 |
| 150.0 | 15.7622 | 15.767 | 15.7787 | 0.008 |
| 200.0 | 2.9862 | 2.9715 | 2.9999 | 0.0037 |
| 250.0 | 0.4303 | 0.4222 | 0.4379 | 0.0014 |
| 300.0 | 0.0551 | 0.0528 | 0.0565 | 0.0005 |
Table 5: Results for 200 asset basket for varying strike $K$

| $K$  | $LB^{BC}$ | Lau & Lo | MC    | SE     |
|------|-----------|----------|-------|--------|
| 0.0  | 143.937   | 143.937  | 144.023 | 0.0715 |
| 50.0 | 119.833   | 119.834  | 119.9215 | 0.0671 |
| 100.0| 99.3342   | 99.3511  | 99.3813 | 0.0625 |
| 150.0| 82.0757   | 82.123   | 82.1487 | 0.058  |

Both our lower bound and the Lau & Lo method give good results for these particular examples, though we note that our method is better for out-of-the-money options. Both methods cannot give the exact price but with the use of lower bounds we always know which side of the price that we are on.

6. Conclusions. In this paper a framework for pricing average-type options via lower and upper bounds has been proposed. Section 2 introduces some general notation that is flexible enough to represent a wide variety of such options with examples given for Asian, basket and VWAP options under both continuous and discrete monitoring.

In Section 3 we looked at the VWAP problem under the so-called Levy-volume model. It is also argued that lower bound approximations for the prices of these VWAP options can be derived via lower bounds for ordinary Asian options, thus reducing the dimensionality of the problem. Examples for the case when the stock price process is a gBm and the volume process a gamma process show that the method is accurate for different levels of volatility.

In Section 4 a method for calculating lower bounds for Asian options for under both continuous and discrete monitoring is presented. The method is a development of the two-step method of Thomson [25] and relies heavily on Fourier methods for the calculations.

An approximation for the delta of the option is also introduced. Numerical experiments show that the lower bounds are very accurate when compared to MC approximations. Finally in Section 5 a lower bound for the price of basket-spread options is proposed and compared with an approximation based on the mean-field approximations developed in [15]. This lower bound, under gBm, is derived via a series of measure-changes and reduces the dimensionality of the pricing problem. The lower bound has the advantage, when compared to the mean-field approximation, in that one knows on what side of the price the approximation resides.

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