



PMC

Portfolio Management Club

PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT CLUB

NEWSLETTER

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Foreword



It is the Board's pleasure to introduce the Portfolio Management Club's Annual Newsletter of 2025.

Reflecting on 2025, markets were defined by an extraordinary confluence of forces. Donald Trump's return to the White House reshaped global trade through the Liberation Day tariffs, which sent the S&P 500 down roughly 12% in a single week before a sharp recovery. The Federal Reserve continued its easing cycle, cutting rates by 75bps over the year, while the Bank of Japan moved in the opposite direction, raising its policy rate for the first time since 1995, unwinding one of the most entrenched carry trades in modern financial history. Throughout it all, AI investment continued to drive a broad bull market, with the S&P 500 finishing the year up 15.4%. We remain committed to a fundamental value investing approach and to the belief that navigating volatility with discipline and patience remains the most reliable path to long-term outperformance.

Within PMC, 2025 was a year of remarkable growth and ambition. Our portfolio delivered a total return of 14.38%, outperforming our 60/40 benchmark by 53bps, with a Sharpe Ratio of 0.96. Beyond performance, the club reached new heights in its external engagement: PMC's first-ever international trip to Luxembourg, visiting HSBC, UBS, the EIB, Nordea AM, and Quintet Private Bank alongside ANESEC, a milestone partnership. In early 2026, we led PMC's first London Field Trip, taking members behind the scenes at Raine Group, Brown Advisory, Bloomberg, the Bank of England, Citi, Santander, and the London Stock Exchange Group. Internally, we expanded our bond portfolio from 10 to 20 individual holdings, deepened the integration between our macro and investment teams, and welcomed in this newsletter exclusive interviews with Alumni from Erste AM and Golub Capital.

Looking ahead, we believe PMC stands at an inflexion point. The value we deliver to our members, through real-world exposure and a community of high-achieving individuals, has never been greater. We remain committed to our mission of serving as the most impactful development platform available to Nova SBE students aspiring to a career in finance. We extend our deepest gratitude to every member, partner, and alumnus whose dedication continues to define what PMC is and what it can become.

Nazir Hemrage
VP of Asset Management

Guilherme Ascensão
President

Carolina Pereira
VP of Operations

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

With



**ANA BÁRBARA
SIMÕES**

*Investment Associate at
Golub Capital*



**MARKUS
GRUBER**

*Fund Manager at Erste
Asset Management*

Interviewed by



**ANDRÉ
TAVARES**

Portfolio Manager



**STEFAN
MARQUÊS**

*External Affairs
Associate*

Interview with Ana Barbara Simões



Ana Bárbara Simões holds a Bachelor's in Management and a Master's in Finance from Nova School of Business and Economics. During her time at Nova, she was actively in the Portfolio Management Club, where she developed a strong interest in financial markets.

She began her career at Goldman Sachs in London as a Corporate Credit Analyst and is currently an Investment Associate at Golub Capital, focusing on Direct Lending in the software sector. Ana shares insights into the private credit industry and offers guidance for students interested in pursuing careers in finance.

Part 1: Personal & Background Story

Q1: What initially motivated you to pursue a career in finance, and how did you end up specialising in credit?

Before starting my bachelor's at Nova, I discovered financial markets while trying to invest in cryptocurrencies on a platform called eToro. Once I joined, I realised there was much more than crypto; I could see company information, financial metrics, and discussions about stock picks. I found it fascinating to research companies and try to understand what made them good investments.

That curiosity led me to join finance-related clubs at Nova, including the Nova Investment Club and later the Portfolio Management Club. At the time, I was mostly interested in equity markets and asset management because that was what I knew best.

During my master's, I had a banking class where we had to perform credit analysis on a mining company. I realised that credit analysis requires understanding the same business fundamentals as equity analysis, but from a downside and risk perspective. Since I tend to be quite risk-averse and enjoy researching business models and markets, credit felt like a very natural fit for me.

I later applied to several credit roles and eventually joined Goldman Sachs in credit, where I realised the work was much more focused on fundamental analysis than I had expected. That confirmed that credit was the right path for me.

Q2: Looking back at your experience in London, what did each role or firm contribute to your development as a professional?

Starting my career in London, especially at a place like Goldman Sachs, was both exciting and intimidating. Being surrounded by very smart and motivated people pushed me to learn quickly and constantly improve.

At Goldman, I learned how to work in a very fast-paced environment and how to take responsibility early on. Even as an analyst, you work on large transactions and collaborate closely with senior professionals. That experience taught me a lot about communication, adaptability, and how to work with people from very different backgrounds and working styles. It was also a great place to build a network. Coming from Nova, most of my contacts were Portuguese, so moving to London and meeting people across the firm through coffee catch-ups and events helped me expand my professional network significantly.

Moving to Golub Capital on the buy-side was a very different experience. The level of due diligence and depth of analysis is much greater. We spend a lot of time understanding companies in detail, speaking with experts, and analysing potential downside scenarios. That experience made me realise how important it is to be detail-oriented and how much there is always left to learn when evaluating businesses and industries.

Interview with Ana Barbara Simões

Investment Associate, Golub Capital

Q3: What soft skills have been most valuable in your roles so far?

One piece of feedback I received both at Goldman and later on was that people appreciated how positive and approachable I was in the office. It may sound like a small thing, but I think being cheerful, saying good morning, asking people how they are, and creating a good atmosphere makes a big difference.

Finance is very much a people business. You spend a lot of time with your colleagues, so building strong relationships and creating an environment where people enjoy working together is extremely important.

I also believe that having genuine relationships is more valuable than simply having a very large network. A smaller number of strong connections, people you trust and can call when you need advice, can make a much bigger difference throughout your career.

Q4: Can you share an example of a deal that was particularly difficult to evaluate?

One deal that I found particularly challenging involved a payments company that claimed to be able to process transactions significantly faster than traditional players.

At first glance, the business seemed relatively simple, but once we started digging deeper, many important questions emerged. We wanted to understand why the company was able to process payments faster than competitors and why larger banks could not replicate the same process.

After a lot of research, expert calls, and analysis, we discovered that part of the advantage came from their proprietary technology and the use of AI to accelerate the KYC process. They had also

built infrastructure and obtained banking licenses in different jurisdictions, which helped them operate more efficiently.

However, another challenge was understanding what would happen in a downside scenario. Because the company operated with a banking license, we had to analyse whether a private credit fund could realistically take control of such a business if things went wrong. That required looking into regulatory constraints and potential ownership structures, which made the analysis much more complex than it initially appeared.

Q5: What makes due diligence challenging for a new deal?

Deals tend to be easier when you already have experience in a specific sector and understand the industry dynamics well. In those cases, it becomes much faster to identify the key metrics and characteristics that define a strong company.

For example, if you are analysing a software company, you immediately know to look at metrics such as retention rates, revenue quality, or how mission-critical the product is for its customers.

The most difficult deals are usually those in industries you have not covered before or where there are significant uncertainties about how the market will evolve. New technologies such as AI can also make the analysis more complex, because it becomes harder to predict how quickly certain industries might change or how existing companies will adapt.

In those situations, the level of research and diligence required increases significantly.

Interview with Ana Barbara Simões

Investment Associate, Golub Capital

Part 2: Direct Lending & Current State of Financial Markets

Q6: What structural changes do you expect in private credit over the next five years?

Private credit will likely continue to expand over the next few years. The market has been growing steadily, with more capital coming from institutional investors such as pension funds and insurance companies, and we are also seeing the development of additional products that support the private credit ecosystem.

At the same time, the industry is becoming more competitive and more consolidated. Private credit is, in many ways, a commoditized product, at the end of the day, it is still a loan. What differentiates firms is their ability to build strong relationships with private equity sponsors, their expertise in specific sectors, and their speed of execution when transactions need to be completed quickly.

Because of this, larger players may continue gaining market share, while smaller firms could find it more difficult to compete. Another potential development is increasing regulatory scrutiny. Just as investment banks faced stricter regulation after the 2008 financial crisis, which actually contributed to the rise of private credit, regulators may eventually pay closer attention to private credit funds as the industry continues to grow.

Overall, the space will remain dynamic, and it will be interesting to see how capital flows and market structures evolve, particularly as broader technological and economic changes influence the financial system.

Q7: How do you see the competitive dynamic between private credit funds and traditional investment banks evolving?

I think private credit funds and traditional investment banks will continue to coexist. Each serves a slightly different role in the market.

Traditionally, private credit has been used for situations where companies are smaller, where transactions require faster execution, or where sponsors prefer to work with a smaller group of lenders rather than syndicating a deal across many investors.

Private credit funds can often move faster because, once they are comfortable with an investment, they can execute directly without having to market the deal to a large number of investors. This simplicity can make the process easier for private equity sponsors.

At the same time, pricing between private credit and the broadly syndicated loan market has become increasingly competitive, partly because there is a large amount of capital available in the private credit space.

Private credit funds have also developed specialized financing structures, such as delayed draw term loans, which can be particularly useful for companies pursuing acquisitions. These types of products make private credit an attractive option for many sponsors.

For these reasons, I do not see either side disappearing. Both private credit funds and traditional bank-led markets will likely continue to play important roles in financing companies.

Interview with Ana Barbara Simões

Investment Associate, Golub Capital

Part 3: Career Advice for PMC Students

Q6: Looking back, what did you learn or experience at PMC that proved most useful in your professional career?

One of the most valuable aspects of PMC was learning how to answer questions and defend an investment view. In investment roles, whether in private credit or private equity, a large part of the job involves presenting ideas and responding to detailed questions from more experienced professionals.

Through the investment committee discussions and presentations at PMC, I gained early exposure to that dynamic. It helped me understand the importance of being confident in your analysis and being able to clearly explain the reasoning behind your conclusions.

Another important takeaway was developing a broader understanding of how markets work and how industries are interconnected. Looking beyond individual companies and thinking about the macroeconomic environment and supply chains can provide important context when analysing investments.

Finally, PMC was valuable because it brought together people who shared similar interests in finance and investing. Working with peers who are equally curious about markets creates a great environment for learning, whether it is discussing ideas, preparing for interviews, or simply challenging each other's thinking.

Part 4: Rapid-Fire Questions

One risk the market is currently underestimating?

Economic displacement radicalisation

What is the first metric you look at when reviewing a company?

Free cash flow yield or free cash flow conversion

Best career advice you have received?

Integrity is key

One book or resource you would recommend for students interested in credit or investment banking?

The Creditor Investor's Handbook by Michael Gatto

Interview with Markus Gruber



Markus Gruber holds a Bachelor's in Business Universität Innsbruck and Master's in Finance from Nova SBE. Markus began his career with internships at Erste Asset Management in Vienna and EY in Munich, before joining Erste full-time in 2020. Today, as Fund Manager, Markus oversees a fund of approximately €100 million in AUM.

Drawn to Asset Management, Markus shares his perspective on the industry's evolving landscape and offers insights for students aspiring to break into finance.

Part 1: Personal & Background Story

Q1: Looking back in time, what was the key moment that made you decide: "I want to work in asset management"?

It was quite early on! When I did my bachelor's in Innsbruck, Austria, there was this very harsh finance professor whom everyone was afraid of taking the exam. I took the exam and aced it basically, so that was the initial spark to go into finance.

When I finished my bachelor's, I tried to get some professional experience by doing a gap year in Vienna, where I did an internship at the same company where I work now, actually. I also went to Munich to work at EY in transaction advisory services (transaction diligence), which was also a very interesting experience.

Then, I decided to move ahead with my studies and join the master's in finance at Nova. That was basically where I shifted towards the asset management track, because it just seemed more interesting to me.

I had a lot of peers who went in the direction of investment banking and then private equity back then, but for me, the more interesting part of finance was the field of asset management, investing and portfolio management. That was also the reason why I joined PMC.

Q2: You have lived across different countries. How did that international exposure help you in the way you think or work?

In general, I think it's very important to get to know people with different views. Culture-wise, it wasn't a big difference, but you still have people with different views, opinions, and skill sets. I think if you go abroad and expand your horizon, you just see more, and that certainly helps you.

When you're in an organisation, it's obviously about collaboration as well, so that openness and adaptability help clearly. I think it's just very important to get these different exposures, not just working on different things while in one location but also going outside of it and meeting different people. I think it's just encouraging.

Q3: How did PMC help you most in your career?

It was very important for me to join PMC, because until that time, I had not really done any company analysis in the depth that we did at PMC back then. So that helped with preparing pitches, looking at companies and analysing them. But also hearing the others, hearing how they came up with insights and valuations on companies. It certainly also helped in terms of getting the exposure to stand in front of people and pitching something, because that's not something you do very often if you're not working somewhere.

Interview with Markus Gruber

Fund Manager, Erste Asset Management GmbH

Q3: You've progressed quickly at Erste and stayed for several years. What do you think drove that growth, and what has kept you motivated to stay?

There is this saying that two factors determine success: one is luck, and the second is the quality of your decisions. I think I was good at both. I was lucky because when I was in my second semester at Nova, COVID hit, which was a bit unfortunate, but at the same time, I got a call from Erste. As I mentioned, I had already been there during my gap year, so they knew my name at least. I was called up and asked if I wanted to join for an internship with the Chief Investment Officer (CIO), to which I said yes. It was COVID, the job market was not very good, and it turned out to be a very good decision. I joined and worked for three years with our CIO. It was not a deep financial analysis, as it was more organisational and management work, but I learned so much. I think it's very important to have someone you can view as a mentor and work closely with, seeing a lot of different things when it comes to management and how to run an organisation. Our investment division is 70 people large, so it's quite a large department. It was all about learning from our CIO.

Then, I tried to figure out where I wanted to go in the field of finance. I had the opportunity to join the equities team, where I did company analysis, as I had learned at PMC, and eventually got the opportunity to join as a Junior Fund Manager. I progressed from that position to Fund Manager about a year and a half ago. I got my own fund, which is around €100 million of AUM. Let's see what the future brings, but for now I'm quite happy where I am.

Part 2: Asset Management & Current State of Financial Markets

Q4: In your view, what will be the biggest structural change in asset management over the next couple of years?

There is already some structural change happening. As an active fund manager, we obviously have competition from ETFs, and that's not new, it's been happening for a long time. So that's competition that will certainly not go away, and I think active managers will continue to be under pressure and will need to find solutions to keep their clients happy. I would say the industry is moving more towards portfolio management with a stronger client service component, because, for example, investing in a global equity fund that charges 1.5% compared to an ETF doing the same for much lower fees is somewhat difficult.

Also, I think there is a reason and purpose for thematic funds, which have been very attractive and sought after. I believe that will continue, but in my opinion, the industry should also move towards wealth management, not only so that very wealthy individuals can access these services, but also going down the wealth levels so that more people can enjoy them. Obviously, AI will also impact the way we do things. We recently got a Bloomberg AI tool, which is quite nice, though you obviously need to take these things with a grain of salt and check whether what they produce is actually accurate. But I think these tools will get better. I don't think clients want to have their money managed purely by AI, so I think there is still some distance between clients and AI when it comes to money management, but that doesn't mean AI can't support the work we do.

Interview with Markus Gruber

Fund Manager, Erste Asset Management GmbH

Q5: Where do you currently see the most interesting opportunities, in terms of region and asset class, and why?

I think Industrials are very interesting, especially in Europe, because there are significant infrastructure needs. There is a general need to renew and expand infrastructure capabilities. On top of that, we've seen fiscal tailwinds, for instance, from Germany with its very large infrastructure budget, but also from Italy, where there has been continued investment. I think this will be an interesting space for the coming years, especially when, and let's hope this happens soon, the war in Ukraine is over, which will create a massive reconstruction need and serve as another tailwind for the sector.

On the topic of AI, we've seen a lot of different developments. The hardware side has been very strong, and I believe that this remains a sweet spot. Software was hit hard, but I believe that was overdone, and I expect to see a recovery there, though this is more of a short to medium-term view.

Part 3: Advice for young finance enthusiasts

Q6: If a student wants to break into asset management, what 2-3 habits would you recommend building early?

I think curiosity is very important, to really drill down into what is going on, while at the same time maintaining a good overview of how the world moves. But also, to look at the companies that could benefit from that and figure out what each one of them does well. Try to really understand what companies do and how they are impacted by macroeconomic developments.

Another important thing for asset management is being able to make decisions. You will never have the full information you need to make a decision, and obviously money, especially other people's money, is involved. So, you need to be comfortable with making decisions under uncertainty.

Part 4: Rapid-Fire Questions

One word to describe markets right now?

Volatile

Biggest myth about being a fund manager?

That we work long, because we don't

Your favourite way to reset after a tough market day?

Going for a run

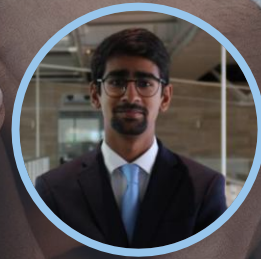
One similarity between skiing and finance?

Decisiveness

MEET THE MEMBERS



GUILHERME ASCENSÃO



NAZIR HEMRAGE



JACK NOEL



DIANA PEREIRA



MIGUEL MONTEIRO



MATTEO CASTALDO

Meet the Members

The People behind it All

PMC brings together 60 members from 9 nationalities, all motivated by curiosity, a desire to learn, and an ambition to grow. In this edition, we give voice to six members who represent the diversity of backgrounds, interests and roles within the club.



Guilherme Ascensão | **President**

Guilherme is in the first year of a Double Degree program

between the International Master's in Finance at Nova SBE and the Master's in Finance at Università Bocconi. Guilherme joined PMC as an External Affairs Associate in 2023, progressing then to VP of Operations and, in 2025, President. Guilherme completed two internships in Private Equity and one in Sales & Trading Assistance during his undergraduate studies and is headed to London in 2026 to complete a Summer Internship in Investment Banking.

Guilherme highlights the importance of ambition and curiosity, coupled with openness to connect to others, as the main sources of success. Guilherme further claims the most transformative and value-added experience in his path was joining the club and getting exposure to the Finance industry and high-achieving, like-minded individuals, in a way he would otherwise not have been able to get.

Advice

“Put yourself out there. If there is one thing PMC taught me, it is stepping outside of my comfort zone. You are among a group of diverse individuals who are striving for excellence and success in arguably the most competitive industry there is. If you can take advantage of this unique setting, PMC will be the most value-adding experience you can have during your academic path.”

Recommendations

Book: *Barbarians at the Gate* by Bryan Burrough and John Helyar



Nazir Hemrage | **VP of Asset Management**

Nazir is undertaking his Master's in Finance programme at Nova

SBE. Nazir joined PMC as an Investment Analyst in 2023, progressing to Investment Team Head in the same year, transitioning in 2024 to Portfolio Management and, in 2025, to VP of Asset Management. Nazir completed two internships, one in WM and another in PE, during his undergraduate studies.

Nazir highlights the importance of critical thinking, coupled with the desire to constantly defy oneself, as the main sources of success. Nazir clearly highlights that the most rewarding experience in his path was joining PMC and being able to get exposure to a network of motivated and dedicated individuals, something he could not find anywhere else.

Advice

“Always strive to be better. There are a lot of tools out there for all types of topics. Use them and Master them, and you will clearly be able to enter a room and stand out from the crowd. PMC was my tool to enter the finance world, and one that clearly helps me stand out since then, due to the exposure to a like-minded and result-driven community, that is always looking to reach higher levels”.

Recommendations

Book: *Thinking Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman

Meet the Members

The People behind it All



Jack Noel | Head of Quant

Jack is in the final year of the Bachelor's in Economics and leads the Quant Team at PMC. In 2025, he spent time in London as a Summer Analyst at NatWest Group. He decided to join PMC to explore practical applications of the topics he studied in class and to learn from more experienced colleagues. His interest lies in the quantitative side of finance, where he feels motivated by building statistical models that help structure decision-making processes.

For Jack, the most important factor for a successful career is learning fast, deeply and being able to think flexibly. Throughout his journey, he considers that PMC has given him unique opportunities to develop practical skills he would hardly find in an academic environment alone. He highlights both the weekly stock pitches, which helped him consolidate knowledge and the trip to London, which strengthened bonds with the rest of the team.

Advice

“Make friends and be a nice person. It will always pay itself back.”

Recommendations

Book: *Quantitative Strategies for Achieving Alpha* by Richard Tortoriello



Diana Pereira | Head of Marketing & Events

Diana completed her BSc in Management and is in the first year of the MSc in Finance. She joined PMC as a Marketing Associate and today leads both the Marketing and Events areas. She found in the club a space where she can combine analysis, creativity and direct impact.

Her main interest lies in financial markets and in how real-world events affect markets and investor behaviour. She considers curiosity the most important skill, as it is what drives someone to dive deeper, seek evidence and transform information into true understanding.

Her experience at PMC brought her practical learning, professional opportunities and challenges that required rigour, critical thinking and time management. Among everything she has experienced, she highlights the organisation of the Financial Markets Compass, a demanding project requiring months of preparation and one that marked her due to its scale and impact.

Advice

“Find people who raise your standards; it makes a huge difference. Being around ambitious, detail-oriented people (like at PMC) pushes you to improve without even noticing you start preparing better, asking sharper questions, and start approaching tasks with greater rigour and higher quality standards. It accelerates your learning and development beyond what you would typically achieve independently.”

Recommendations

Podcast: *All Else Equal* (Wharton/Lauder Institute)

Meet the Members

The People behind it All



Miguel Monteiro | IT Associate

Miguel completed his BSc in Management and is now starting the MSc in Finance. Within PMC, he began as an analyst, became Head of Investment and currently belongs to the IT team. His professional background includes experience in non-linear exotics trading at BNP Paribas, Salesforce consultancy at MagicWave, AI agent development at MagicBeans and, more recently, work as an AI analyst at the PortoBay Group.

What motivated him to join PMC was the opportunity to work with ambitious people with a strong passion for finance. He is particularly interested in private equity and in derivatives/structured products, whether because of the nature of the deals or the underlying mathematics.

For him, communication, curiosity and a strong work ethic are essential skills. Since joining PMC, he feels he has grown significantly in his ability to present, communicate professionally and collaborate on projects with real-world application. He also highlights the Five Squared Challenge, organised by BNP Paribas, as a particularly impactful experience.

Advice

“I would advise students to seek to learn as much as possible and to apply what they learned out of their own curiosity, be it through books, videos or a combination of both, in the real world by pursuing side projects that can be leveraged in interview processes and conversations with professionals in the industries they have the most interest in. Look to connect and interact with like-minded young people who also have a big passion for finance.”

Recommendations

Book: *Mastering Private Equity: Transformation via Venture Capital, Minority Investments and Buyouts* by C. Zeisberger, B. White, M. Prah

Book: *Exotic Options and Hybrids: A Guide to Structuring, Pricing and Trading* by Mohamed Bouzouba, Adel Osseiran



Matteo Castaldo | Macro Analyst

Matteo recently completed his Master's in Finance at Nova.

Within PMC, he worked as a Macro Analyst, a role he also held in a Swiss financial consultancy during his studies. He believes that, in such a competitive sector, the key is identifying the area of finance that interests you most and keeping your curiosity active every day.

He describes his experience at PMC as educational and marked by a welcoming, calm and collaborative environment. Through the pitches and the daily dynamics of the club, he felt he developed relevant financial skills and was constantly pushed out of his comfort zone. Among all experiences, he highlights the trip to London as the most significant.

Advice

“Do not be afraid to talk to people and network. When you feel insecure, just dive in; you will realise that the fear was more in your head than in reality. Moreover, stay hungry for knowledge, because while networking creates opportunities, you will not go far without a deep understanding of the subject.”

Recommendations

Book: *Efficiently Inefficient* by Pedersen

Newsletter: *Markets AM* by WSJ

2025 YEAR- IN-REVIEW



ANDRÉ SILVA

Markets & Economy

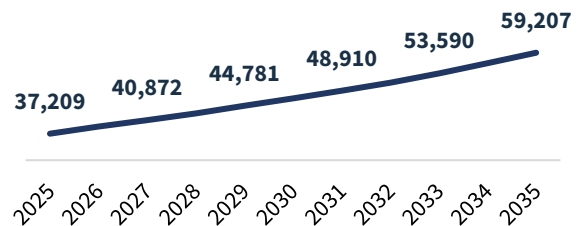
2025 Year-in-Review

2025 kept investors very occupied, as markets were shaped by volatility and major geopolitical shifts. Donald Trump being inaugurated President of the United States at the beginning of the year had a major effect on global economic mechanisms, whilst investment in AI continued to drive the major bull market. Here is a breakdown of the most important events that happened in global markets in 2025.

Trump's first year of his second presidency was marked by various fiscal expansions. The One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB) was signed into law in July, considered one of the most fiscally expansionary bills passed in modern American history. It raises the debt ceiling by \$5 trillion, and increases the budget deficit by **\$2.8 trillion** by 2034. This mainly focuses on tax cuts, with a hint of classic trickle-down Reaganomics. Trump's 2017 tax law was extended permanently, which included various provisions such as lowering the corporate tax rate to a flat **21%**. There was also a provision that allowed for a deductible on loans for U.S.-assembled cars, contributing to a major US car stock rally. Ford and General Motors stock increased **49.84%** and **75.03%** over the course of one year. Various tax credits were also extended in the OBBB, including credits for children, adoption, and senior benefits. The bill was also marked by a major increase in defense spending, reinforcing it by **\$150 billion**. A further **\$150 billion** was directed to support Trump's restrictive immigration policies, targeting ICE operations and deportations. The nature of this bill brought about some concern regarding the U.S.' debt, as it soared to record highs of **\$37 trillion**, a **23%** increase since 2022. The U.S Budget Committee projects a debt of **\$59 trillion** by 2035. Part of the concern behind the deficit has placed downward pressure on the dollar, severely affecting how FX trades are conducted. Depreciation was also aggravated by the

perceived erosion of Fed independence, with Trump repeatedly commenting on how he'd like to see rate cuts, and Jerome Powell facing federal investigations.

U.S. Debt (\$Bn)



Finally, liberation day tariffs were another major market mover and cause for dollar depreciation. On April 2nd, Trump announced an executive order instituting major import tariffs on most global economies. This crashed the market for a few days, with the S&P 500 seeing some of the largest daily point losses in history. In total, it dropped around **12%** in one week before making a sharp recovery. Bonds also declined in this time, meaning that the traditional mechanism of bond and stock prices moving in opposite directions did not hold. The severity of these events eventually led to a 90-day pause announcement on April 9th, before being declared illegal by the U.S. Supreme Court in February 2026.

All in all, these tariff announcements also shifted global trading patterns, with some importers switching supply chains away from highly affected countries. Overnight, companies in the manufacturing sectors began looking for lower-risk diversification strategies. In principle, the EU has signed but not yet ratified a trade deal with Mercosur (an agreement with various Latin American nations) that will reduce tariffs and quotes on around **91%** of exports within the next 15 years, signifying a new era in global trade.

Markets & Economy

2025 Year-in-Review

Shifting gears a bit, inflation in the US and Europe remained stable but sticky. Inflation has remained slightly above target at the **2-3%** range all throughout 2025, providing cautious optimism to central banks. The ECB lowered rates **4** times in the first half of 2025, totalling a 100 basis point drop from **3.00 to 2.00**. The last of these cuts came in June, and **no further cuts** are expected for 2026.

On the other hand, the Fed has been consecutively cutting rates since the summer, having lowered them from **4.50% to 3.75%**, with one-two more rate cuts expected for 2026.



On the other side of the globe, Japan has experienced major changes in the way they conduct monetary policy in 2025, **affecting global carry trade and FX patterns**. Historically, Japan has always kept interest rates at zero or sub-zero values, allowing the Yen to be the reference currency in carry trades. However, in 2024, the Bank of Japan hiked rates for the first time since 2008, with the trend continuing into 2025 with two more hikes, increasing the interest rate from **0.25% to 0.75%**. Japan is now experiencing its highest borrowing costs since 1995, as the BOJ attempts to stabilize monetary policy and fight rising inflation, which has been pulled out of its traditional deflation tendencies after the bubble burst in the 1990s, bringing economic stagnation.

As interest rate gaps narrow, investors have started looking for new currency alternatives to begin borrowing and converting, bringing about disruption in FX markets.

On the fiscal side, new prime minister Sanae Takaichi was elected in a major landslide, as she continues to propel Abenomics. She has been somewhat critical of the rate hikes due to her fiscally expansionary vision for the country, and has shown a desire for cheaper borrowing costs despite Japan's debt-to-GDP ratio of **237%**. She is also a proponent of increased military spending, pledging to spend **2%** of its GDP on this matter.



Finally, markets were above all shaped by movements in AI in 2025. NVIDIA stock rose **31%** over the course of the year, heightening dominance of the magnificent seven. As AI user share climbed to above **40%** in some European nations, whilst sitting at **28.3%** in the U.S, companies continue to pour billions of dollars into incorporating AI into their operations, providing sentiment for a major bull market, with the S&P 500 index rising **15.4%**. Looking into 2026, investors may start being more demanding on real returns on this massive AI investment, which may make or break the market.

2026 OUTLOOK



MATTEO VALENTE



ELENA MORELLO



MIGUEL PINHO



SOFIA SOUSA



GABRIEL MAIRHOFER



RAFAEL RODRIGUES



VALENTINA XAVIER



FRANCISCO VALENTIM

2026 Outlook

Macroeconomic Outlook

Following a year marked by **tariff shocks**, **political volatility** and the continuation of the **AI-driven bull market**, the global economy enters 2026 in a state of **unease stability**. Growth has held up better than many feared, inflation has retreated from its peak and most major central banks have either completed or are in the middle of their **easing cycles**, with the **Bank of Japan** remaining the monetary **outlier**. The defining **challenge** of 2026 is the collision between **fiscal sustainability** and **monetary independence**, forcing policymakers to navigate between containing persistent inflation and avoiding a destabilizing spike in funding costs.

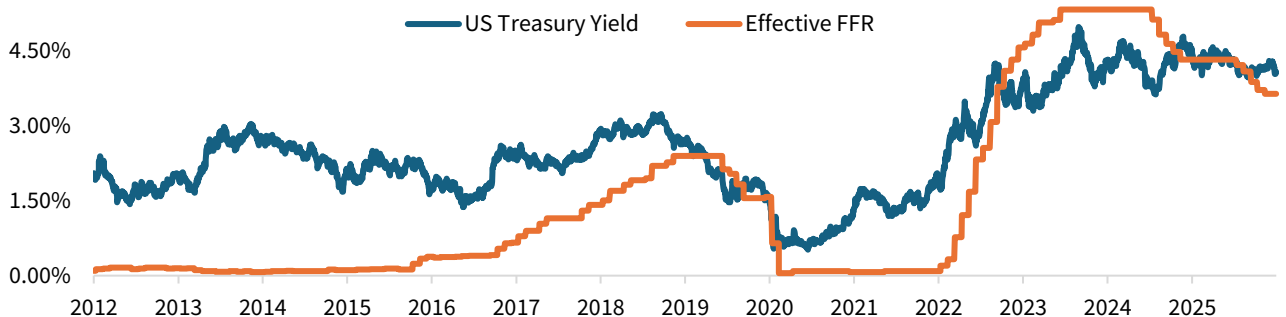
United States

The U.S. economy enters 2026 looking reasonably healthy on paper. Goldman Sachs projects **unemployment** stabilizing around **4.5%** and **GDP growing** around **2.8%**. **Tax provisions** from the **OBBB's** are expected to inject roughly **\$100 billion** in additional **refunds** in early 2026, boosting consumption. **Easier financial conditions** from the Fed's 2025 rate cuts are beginning to filter through, though the Fed remains cautious given the persistence of inflation. In addition, the **drag** from 2025's **tariff shock** – estimated by Goldman Sachs to have subtracted 0.6 percentage points from H2 GDP growth - was expected to slowly **fade away**.

This trajectory shifted abruptly on February 20,

when the **Supreme Court declared** the majority of Trump's **Liberation Day tariffs** as **unconstitutional**. Within hours, the administration pivoted to **Section 122 of the 1974 Trade Act** imposing a temporary **10% global tariff**, expiring mid July 2026 unless extended by Congress. As the **net reduction in the effective tax rate** is only estimated **~1 percentage point**, uncertainty around future trade policy outweighs the immediate economic relief. At the same time, large US corporates are expected to continue deploying **enormous resources** into **AI** and **data center** related **capital expenditures**, with **investors** increasingly **demanding** actual evidence of **real productivity gains** and **financial returns**.

The **Federal Reserve** remains **mid-cycle**. After **cutting** rates by 75bps in 2025, markets currently price in **two additional 25bps cuts** in late 2026, while the Fed only projects one, reflecting expectations that **inflation** will **remain** slightly **above target**. Complicating the outlook, Jerome Powell's term as Fed Chair ends in May, with **Kevin Warsh** in line to be his successor. Warsh, who already served as a governor from 2006 to 2011, recently argued for two priorities: **lower short-term interest rates** and a **smaller Fed balance sheet**. At the same time, Warsh has to **navigate** the **biggest structural refinancing challenge** in the United States modern history: Nearly **\$10 trillion** in Treasuries are **maturing in 2026** and over **70%**



2026 Outlook

Macroeconomic Outlook

of outstanding debt **within 5 years**, while the **10-Year Treasury yield** stands at **4.1%**, well above the average coupon. This creates a critical policy trap: Lowering rates for **short term fiscal relief** by supporting refinancing risks **re-accelerating inflation**, further **weakening the dollar** and **eroding the Fed's monetary independence**, while **tightening financial conditions** to defend credibility risks **destabilizing Treasury markets** during the **largest rollover cycle** in modern US history.

Eurozone

Europe, meanwhile, enters 2026 in its most stable macro position in several years. **GDP growth** is set to reach **1.2%**, supported by a **resilient labor market** with unemployment expected to decline toward 6.2%. **Germany's €500 billion infrastructure and investment fund**, announced in early 2025, is beginning to **stimulate economic activity**, while Spain and Portugal are expected to continue outperforming the continental average with growth above 2%. However, the **structural productivity gap** with the **US** remains a **defining challenge**. Since 1995, Europe has **fallen behind** by roughly **25%** in **labor productivity per hour** worked, a divergence that fiscal stimulus alone can not close.

The **ECB** is the only major central bank that has already **completed its easing cycle**, with the **deposit rate** standing at **2%** and no further cuts expected in 2026. **Inflation** is projected to stay

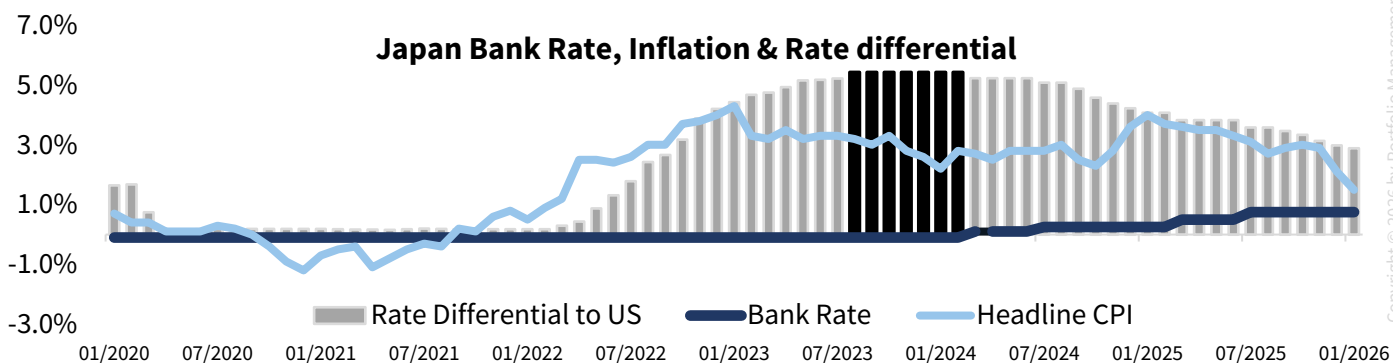
slightly **below** the **2% target** and the ECB continues its **balance-sheet reduction** through the gradual wind-down of APP and PEPP reinvestments.

Japan

Japan remains the global **monetary outlier** in 2026. After raising its **policy rate** to **0.75%** in December 2025 - the highest since 1995 - the Bank of Japan is expected to deliver **up to three additional hikes** in **2026**, according to forecasts from Citi and Minho. Meanwhile, inflation is expected to remain above target as **wage growth** will exceed 5% due the Shuntō negotiations and Prime Minister Takaichi's **¥21.3 trillion stimulus package** further supports domestic demand, with **GDP** projected to grow between **0.8-1.1%**.

As **US-Japan rate differential** is expected to **narrow** from its 2023 peak of 500bps to below **200bps** in 2026, the economic rationale of the **yen carry trade continues to erode**. CFTC data shows **net short yen positions down** roughly **40%** since November 2025. Given Japan's status as the **largest foreign holder of US assets**, even modest repatriation flows towards newly attractive domestic assets could **reshape global liquidity** and translate into meaningful **outflows from US assets**, thereby putting **upward pressure on US Treasury yields** and **equity volatility** as the **yen's** long-awaited **appreciation** finally begins to materialize.

Japan Bank Rate, Inflation & Rate differential



2026 Outlook

Industry Outlook

Consumer Discretionary

The sector is **rebounding after the 2025 AI hyperscale overvaluations**, but **growth is heavily concentrated on certain sub-sectors**. As stated by LSEG, earnings are projected to climb by 10.9% in 2026, a from the 5.9% growth seen in 2025. Hotels, Restaurants and Leisure sub-sector are more prone to lead in 2026, **as the “experience economy” continues to outperform**. On the other hand, Household Durables sector is expected to be the weakest performer, as high interest rates in the US and a soft housing market drag demand. In general, we are witnessing a **manifestation of the K-shaped economy**, where the middle-class is shrinking, making consumers look for either value or status, and little in between.

Consumer Staples

It seems the new year’s resolution for some investors was not to make more money, but to preserve it, as the sector is starting the year benefiting from investor divestment in high risk, high valuation stocks. Investors **poured a surprising \$3.6 billion in consumer staple stocks** and ETFs at the start of the year. **This highlights a structuralized market repricing rather than short tactical positions**.

Industrials

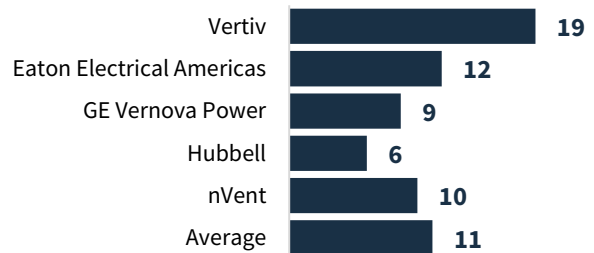
Despite some macroeconomic uncertainty, the defense and aerospace spending and AI data center demand still cushion the growth of the sector. **The median EPS may grow another 10%**, based on consensus from Bloomberg Intelligence. This is mostly driven by AI data-center build-out and associated power and grid upgrades, as the Hyperscaler capital spending is

projected to exceed \$600 billion in 2026, approximately 70% increase from 2025. This is inflating backlogs through record orders for electrical equipment manufacturers, giving decade-long revenue visibility. This demand is particularly reliant on supporting power-hungry chips, as infrastructure is shifting towards a high-voltage 800 VDC architecture. **Leading the charge are GE Vernova, Vertiv, and nVent**, the two latter benefiting from high-growth infants like liquid cooling and advanced power delivery.

Liquid cooling is crucial for heat management of high-density data centers, quickly establishing itself as the industry standard. It is only efficient when racks surpass 40Kw of energy consumption, however as newer generations are projected to consume up to 1000Kw, this lower bound becomes somewhat irrelevant.

Another trend is US reshoring and automation, following trade tensions with China. Since the pandemic, these projects have amounted to \$2.6 trillion in North America. However, most other industrial vertical struggles faced could be intensified by absence of further interest rate cuts. Industries such as metals and machinery appear to be stabilizing at lower levels.

2026 Organic Sales Growth



2026 Outlook

Industry Outlook

Financials

The 2026 outlook for the financials sector indicates a **much-anticipated shift** towards more **stable** and **diversified earnings**, as this industry is finally moving beyond the volatility and uncertainty of previous years.

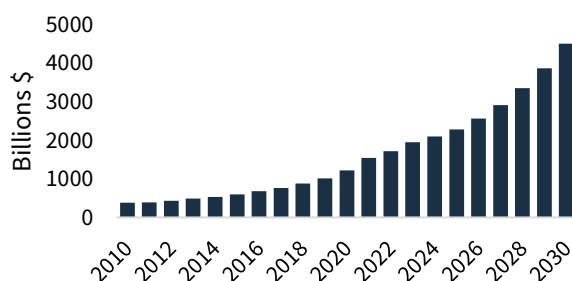
Net interest income still drives banking revenue, but **structural competition** from private credit and fintech lenders now prevents automatic margin expansion.

Following years of rate volatility, 2026 sees a **major advisory recovery** as postponed IPOs and M&A resume. North American banks will sustain momentum through robust pipelines, while European banks may reach **5% revenue growth** (up from 1–2% in 2025) via higher rate expectations, better GDP outlooks, and trading strength.

Asset management in 2026 splits between public and private market growth. While peak equity prices drive AUM-linked revenue, fee compression continues as investors favour **outcome-oriented solutions** and **passive ETFs**.

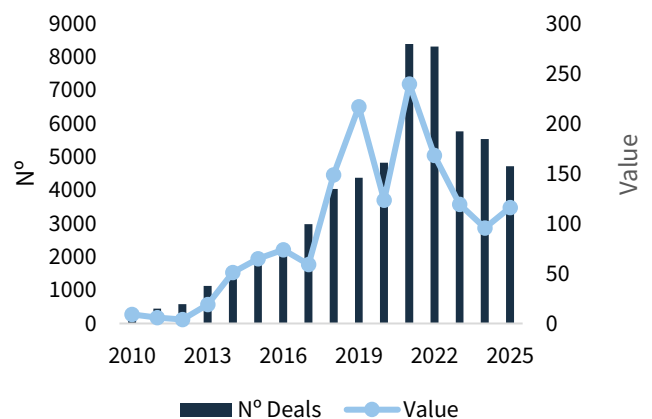
Consequently, alternatives such as private credit, private equity, and infrastructure have become vital, offering **higher-fee resilience** and **longer-duration capital**. Private credit is redefining the ecosystem by competing directly with banks for mid-sized corporate lending and acquisition financing.

Private Credit Total AUM



The **insurance** and **fintech** sectors are undergoing fundamental transformations characterized by **high profitability** and a shift toward infrastructure. P&C insurers remain **resilient** and highly profitable, backed by strong capital buffers even as rapid price hikes begin to slow. Simultaneously, life insurers are leveraging higher long-term interest rates to offer significantly **better returns on retirement products**. Within the fintech space, the focus has evolved from pure disruption toward **institutionalization**.

Number & Value of Investments



Success in this area is now driven by **embedded finance**—integrating financial services into non-financial platforms like e-commerce—and the use of AI to advance credit underwriting and fraud detection.

Despite a positive outlook, macro risks persist. Potential **sovereign debt repricing** threatens bank balance sheets and global funding. While currently stable, rising **credit card delinquencies** signal consumer stress that could worsen if unemployment climbs. Furthermore, **geopolitical shocks** may disrupt capital flows and cross-border activity.

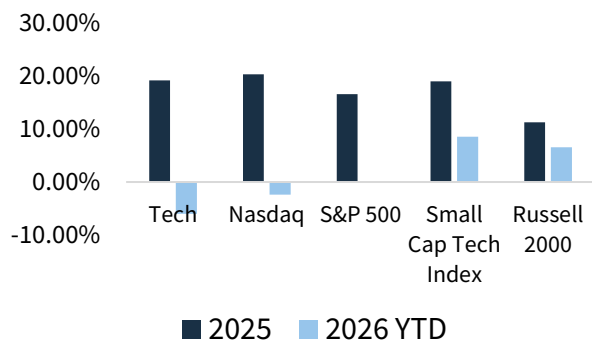
2026 Outlook

Industry Outlook

Technology

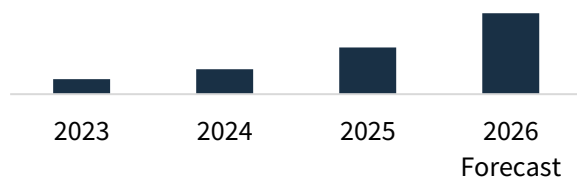
After three years of dominance, the technology sector is facing its first real test in 2026. **Large-cap tech is down over 6% year to date** while small-cap tech is up nearly 9%. This is a rotation that reflects the market sentiment regarding the returns and the scale of AI investment, resulting in a **massive selloff** after earnings for Q4 were released.

Tech sector vs Benchmark Indexes



The scale of investment is **unprecedented**. The four largest hyperscalers are projected to spend over \$600 billion on capital expenditure in 2026, with 75% directed into AI infrastructure. To put it into perspective, that's **five times more than in 2023**.

CAPEX of the 4 biggest hyperscalers (\$bn)



Against that, AI-related cloud revenues currently represent **roughly 10% of what's being spent to generate them**. Also, DeepSeek's emergence in January sharpened this concern by demonstrating frontier AI capabilities at a fraction of western costs; **the market is no longer rewarding AI ambition alone**, it is demanding evidence of returns.

Semiconductor Sector Analysis

Within the sector, subsector selection matters more than a directional call on tech. In semiconductors, the most important names to watch aren't necessarily the most obvious ones. **TSMC is effectively a piece of critical global infrastructure** that no competitor can replicate, and ASML holds a monopoly on the equipment that makes advanced chips possible. This sector is being driven by the immense investment in data centers and GPUs, with revenues estimated to reach **one trillion dollars this year**.

AI ecosystem diversification

The AI story is entering a phase. It's now entering a phase that is all about everything AI needs to actually run - and that's a much bigger and more diverse investable universe. While the headline is regarding data center buildout and chips manufacturing, other subsectors such as **Power infrastructure, cooling systems, cybersecurity, optical networking, etc.** The companies who provide these services will see growing returns regardless of who wins the AI race.

2026 Outlook

Industry Outlook

Real Estate

Global listed real estate enters 2026 no longer as a single macro trade, but as a story of sharp **regional and sector divergence**. After three years of valuation compression triggered by higher interest rates, the sector is stabilizing operationally, yet capital recovery remains uneven.

Europe faces the toughest **structural constraints**. **Office** assets account for more than 35% of REIT indices, but prime property yields of 3.5–5% sit close to borrowing costs of roughly 4–5%, limiting the benefits of leverage. **AI-driven workforce reductions** and **hybrid work** models further weigh on demand. Despite deep discounts to net asset value, a broad re-rating appears unlikely without stronger earnings growth. M&A activity could provide selectivity upside, with consolidation scope for scale or portfolio shaping. Still, with retail representing less than 15% of the index composition, broader sector re-rating remains structurally constrained.

North America stands on firmer ground thanks to diversification. **Data centers** and **healthcare** benefit from structural tailwinds such as **digital infrastructure expansion** and aging demographics, while retail stabilizes. Office remains fragile, and the entire sector remains highly **sensitive** to the path of **U.S. long-term yields**.

A clearer rate-cut trajectory could be required to unlock strong capital markets.

Asia-Pacific presents the clearest **divergence**. **Tokyo's** office market is the standout: vacancy rates near 1% and the growing use of inflation-linked leases support rental growth that could reach 10% in 2026.

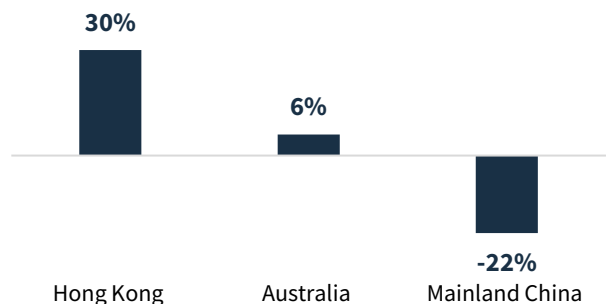
Hong Kong's residential segment is rebounding, with home prices projected to rise 7% next year. Developers trade at steep discounts, suggesting re-rating potential if recovery continues.

Mainland China, however, remains in structural contraction, with falling home prices and rental yields below mortgage rates discouraging investment.

Australia and **Singapore** offer relative stability. Australian office yields around 6.5% provide attractive spreads over government bonds, drawing cross-border capital, while Singapore combines high occupancy with moderate but resilient price growth. The defining feature of 2026 is **selectivity**. Falling rates may help valuations, but structural

shifts in office demand and uneven capital flows mean **real estate will not rebound uniformly**.

APAC Listed Real Estate Equities - 2025 performance



PORTFOLIO



ANDRÉ SILVA



BERNARDO RIBEIRO



ANDRÉ TAVARES



MATTEO VALENTE



LUCA POLTRONIERI



RICARDO TAVEIRA

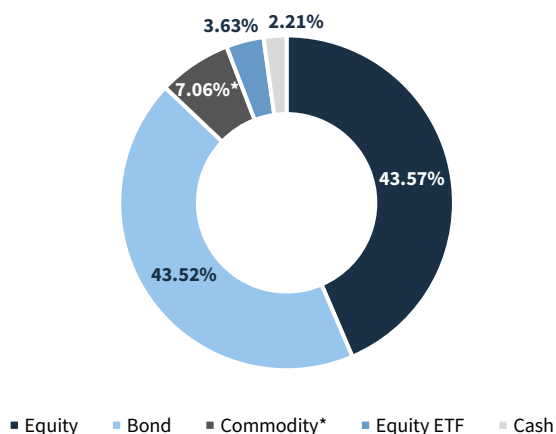
Portfolio Overview

Portfolio Strategy

Strategy Highlights

Our portfolio construction was guided by a clear focus on improving both the depth of research and the manageability of the portfolio. To support this, each investment team was limited to **pitching just two new securities**, either equities or bonds. This constraint led to a more efficient use of the club's resources (our members), resulting in more **rigorous analysis** and **higher-conviction ideas**, while ensuring that our existing positions could be monitored more effectively. Another important development throughout the year was the **closer integration between the macro and investment teams**. The macro team's perspectives are now embedded in the investment process, providing an additional layer of sector-level analysis and insight into broader macroeconomic risks. This ensures that both sector and security-level **decisions are more informed**, while increasing the overall portfolio **accountability**. We believe this integration represents the future of the club, with investment and macro teams working side by side to shape a more **cohesive and insightful portfolio strategy**.

Allocation by Asset Class

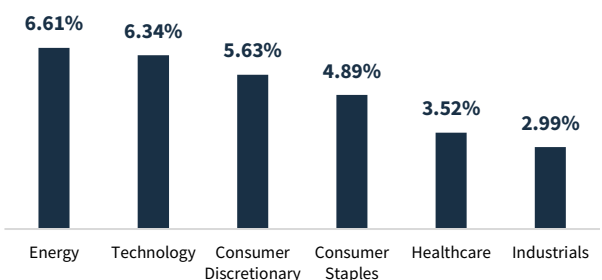


* Represents iShares Silver Trust (SLV), closed on the 23 Dec

Strategy Outcomes

On the portfolio management side, we made several adjustments to our holdings over the year. Regarding equities, in the first semester, we acquired new positions in **DHT**, **Novo Nordisk** (NOVO-B.CO), **Axcelis Technologies** (ACLS), and **Euronet Worldwide** (EETF). Conversely, we sold our positions in Ingles Markets (IMKTA), Iron Mountain (IRM), and Leidos Holdings (LDOS); the latter two were divested following stop-loss triggers. In this last semester, we acquired new positions in **Perdoceo Education** (PRDO), **Scatec** (SCATC.OL), and **Nomad Foods** (NOMD) all of which were selected for their strong fundamentals and alignment with our sector outlook. On the other hand, we sold our positions in Generali (G.MI), Nextracker (NXT), Axcelis Technologies (ACLS), Apple (AAPL), GoDaddy (GDDY), Amplifon (AMP.MI) and Euronet Worldwide (EETF); the first three were closed upon hitting the established take-profits, while the latter three were divested following stop-loss triggers. Periods of increased volatility throughout the year reinforced the importance of this strict approach to risk management, allowing us to **manage downside risk** and **reallocate capital efficiently**. From a sector allocation standpoint, we reduced our exposure to **Healthcare** and **Technology**, reflecting a more cautious assessment of the sectors' risk-reward balance.

Sector Equity Weight



Portfolio Overview

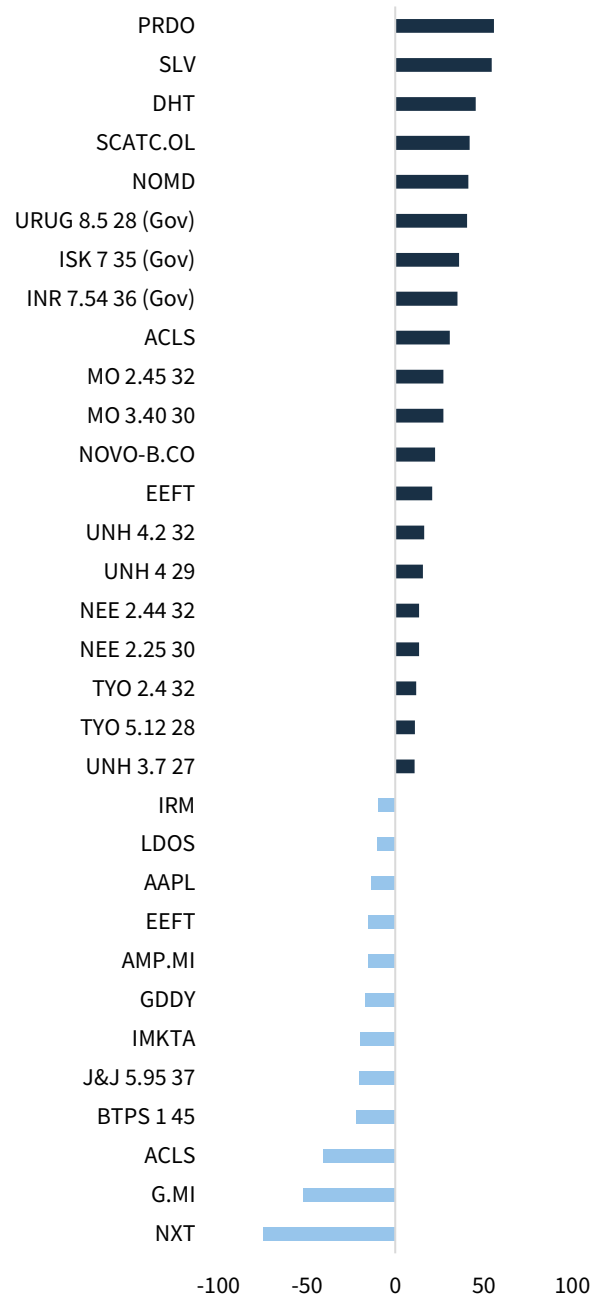
Portfolio Strategy

Strategy Highlights

Throughout the year, we continued to build on our **value-oriented approach**, focusing on companies with solid fundamentals, making investment decisions based on **intrinsic value** rather than short-term market movements. Last year, we placed **greater emphasis on small-cap opportunities**, aiming to capture alpha in less covered segments of the market. However, we quickly recognized that analyzing these companies can be challenging, given the **limited** availability of **information** and **resources** for coverage. As a result, we adopted a more flexible approach, allowing teams to bring forward **mid-cap and selected large-cap companies**, provided they remained aligned with our **value-driven mindset** and offered **attractive risk-adjusted returns**. Our objective for the year remained to **outperform our benchmark**; a 60/40 allocation composed of 60% S&P 500 ETF and 40% a 3–7-year US Treasury Bond ETF.

Strategy Outcomes

Alongside our activity in equities, we expanded our individual bond holdings. In the first semester, we entered position in a mix of **UnitedHealth** bonds (2-, 4-, and 7-year maturities), **Iceland’s 10-year government bond**, **Toyota** bonds (3- and 7-year maturities), and **India’s 11-year government bond**. In this last semester, we acquired new positions in **NextEra** bonds (5- and 7-year maturities), **Altria Group** bonds (5- and 7-year maturities) and **Uruguay’s 3-year government bond**. They were all good additions that further diversify our duration profile and exposure to different markets. Finally, we entered a position in the iShares **Silver** Trust (SLV) as part of our commodity allocation, closed in the 23 Dec.



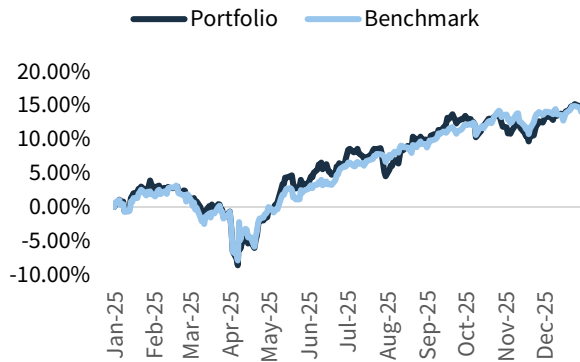
Investment flows, thousands of dollars

<i>Individual bonds</i>	
10 Dec 24	20 Dec 25
<i>Equities average weight</i>	
2.5% Dec 24	3.2% Dec 25

Portfolio Overview

Portfolio Performance

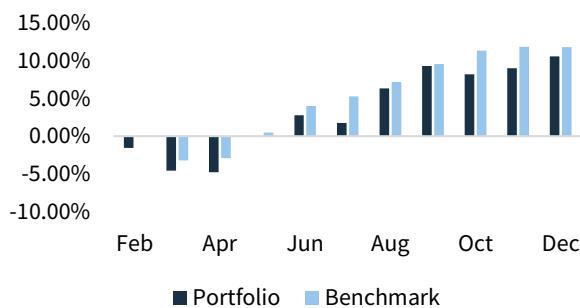
Overall Performance



Portfolio and benchmark returns

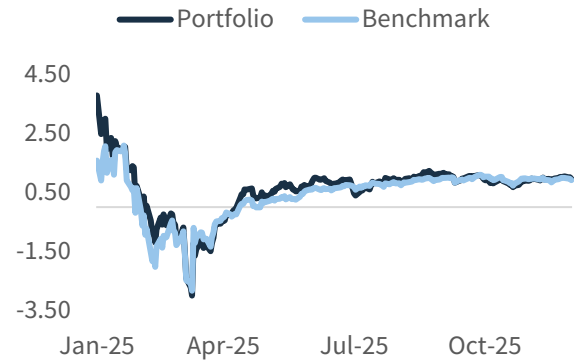
Over the course of 2025, **PMC's portfolio delivered a total return of +14.38%**, outperforming our SPY/IEI 60/40 benchmark by +0.53pp, which also registered a positive performance of +13.85%. Despite the year's challenging environment, marked by peak trade uncertainty, elevated geopolitical tensions, and an impressive outflow from U.S. dollar assets, PMC's portfolio demonstrated strong resilience, as by mid-April the portfolio was down -8.60% (vs. -7.88% for the benchmark).

As the year progressed, performance broadened as we captured standout performers this year and further diversified the portfolio's allocation mix, including our 2nd ever exposure to precious metals through **iShares Silver Trust**, enabling the portfolio to finish 2025 on a positive footing.



Portfolio and benchmark monthly returns

Risk-Adjusted Returns



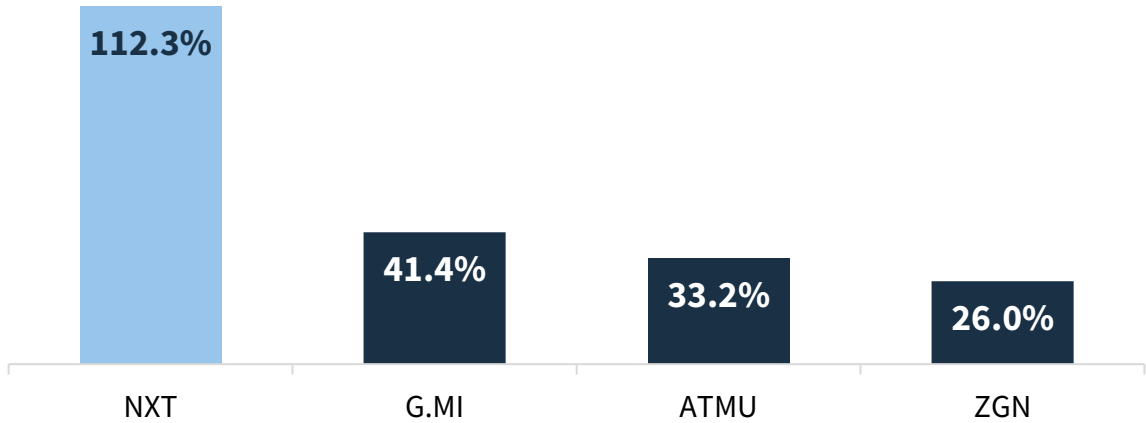
Portfolio and benchmark Sharpe Ratio evolution

PMC's portfolio delivered strong risk-adjusted performance in 2025, posting a **Sharpe Ratio of 0.96** against the benchmark's 0.91. This marks a meaningful improvement versus year-end 2024, as it climbed from 0.80 while the benchmark's declined from 1.83. **Volatility has been well-managed at 11.36%**, marginally below the benchmark's 11.43%, confirming that the portfolio's outperformance was earned through better decision-making rather than simply taking on more risk. On the downside, the portfolio experienced a maximum drawdown of -12.06%, compared with -10.69% for the benchmark. A major achievement lies in the portfolio's **50.57% win days**, indicating a balanced return distribution across the year.

Portfolio Metrics	Portfolio	Benchmark
Cumulative Return	14.38%	13.85%
Volatility	11.36%	11.43%
Sharpe Ratio	0.96	0.91
Max. Drawdown	-12.06%	-10.69%
Skewness	0.41	1.51
Kurtosis	9.84	22.82
VaR	-0.98%	-0.97%
% Win Days	50.57%	

Portfolio and benchmark metrics

Top Performers – Equities



Nextpower Inc. (NXT)

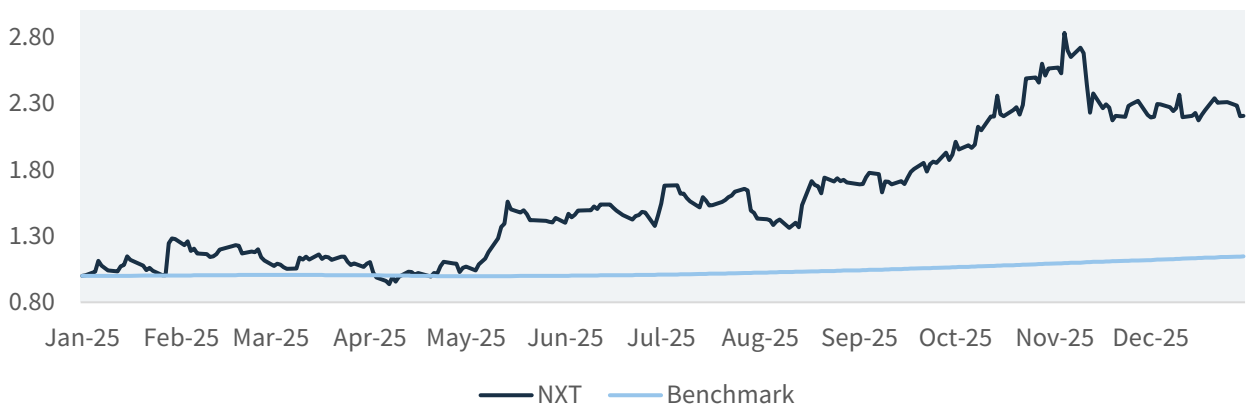
+112.29%

Nextpower Inc. is a California-based **global leader in solar tracking technology**, offering a range of products and services designed to maximize solar energy production. Through its dominant position in the industry, the company collaborates with solar farm developers to provide customized solar tracking systems. According to the IEA’s most recent global electricity report, **renewables**, led by solar power, are **expected to become the leading source of electricity in most major economies by 2030**.

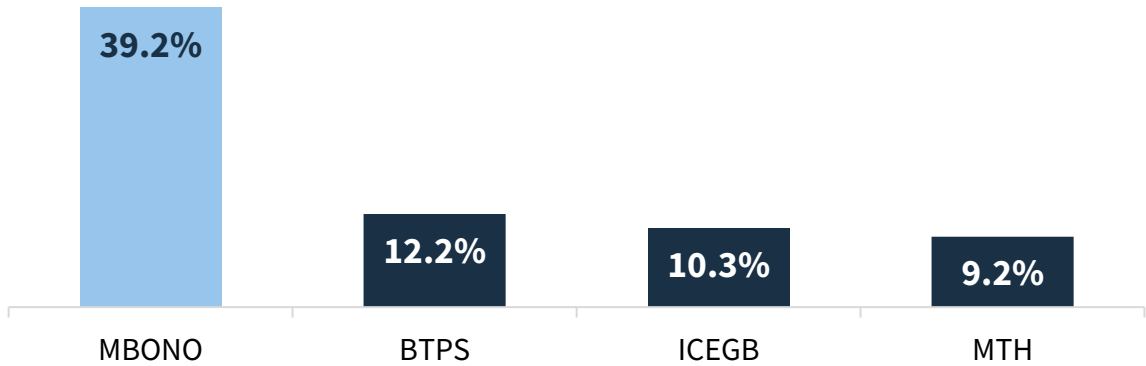
The firm closed 2025 on a remarkable note, delivering record results across its key financial metrics. **Revenue grew 18%** to approximately \$3 billion, while **adjusted EBITDA increased 49%** to \$776 million. Driving this growth was robust demand for Nextpower’s flagship NX Horizon Hail Pro™ and NX Horizon-XTR™ tracker solutions, alongside record bookings for its TrueCapture® software platform. The company’s geographic reach continues to expand, with **operations now spanning 40+ countries** and **supported by 90+ global partner factory facilities** and **3 dedicated R&D innovation centres**.

Two major acquisitions in FY2025 and a third transaction announced shortly after year end have also expanded Nextpower’s technology platform to include electrical balance of systems (eBOS) products and solutions. In 2025, **Nextpower’s share price increased by +112.29%**.

NXT performance versus Benchmark



Top Performers – Fixed Income



Mexico Bonds, Bonos 7.75% 23/11/2034

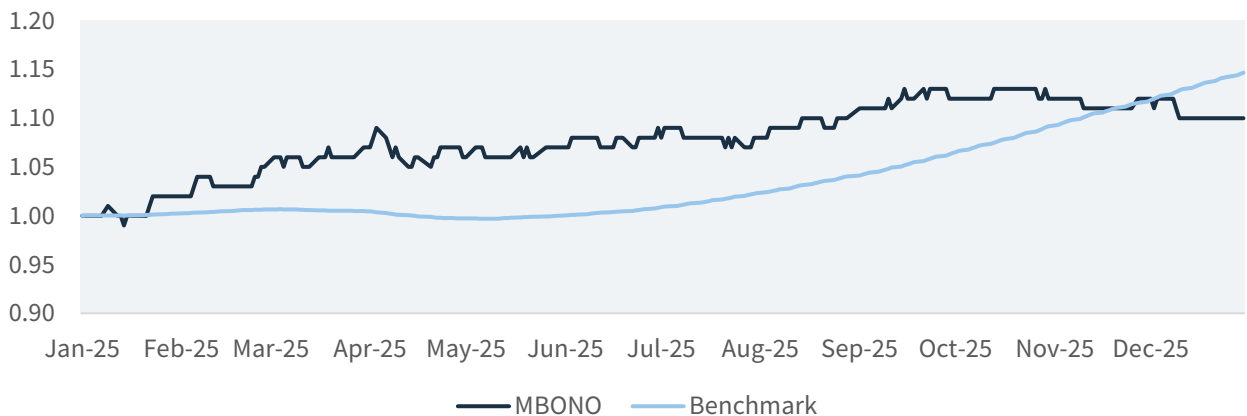
+39.17%

Mexico's Bonos, with **maturity on 23rd November 2034**, was a standout contributor within PMC's fixed income allocation in 2025. Over the year, the sovereign bond delivered strong performance, with **price increasing by +39.17%**.

As 2025 evolved, **Banco de México continued its rate-cutting cycle**, with the bank lowering its benchmark interest rate by 25 basis points in December, **bringing the rate to 7.00%** (lowest level since April 2022). This signals confidence that inflation is still on track to return to target by late 2026 despite an increase in near-term inflation risks.

In parallel, the **Mexican peso recovered steadily in 2025** after a volatile period in 2024, gradually strengthening throughout the year against the US dollar. The **country's economy grew by +0.7% in 2025**, above the +0.4% consensus, with a positive performance in 4Q25 (0.8% QoQ). This resilience was supported by continued strength in the services sector, early signs of stabilization in manufacturing, and a fading negative base effect in construction. Furthermore, the automotive sector showed positive signals toward the end of 2025, supported by improved demand for vehicles and auto parts in the U.S., as well as continued growth in the production of computer and communications equipment (driven by higher investment in artificial intelligence in the US).

MBONO performance versus Benchmark



In-Depth Asset Analysis

Scatec ASA

Key Facts

Asset Class: Equities

Market Cap: \$2.00 Bn

Ticker: SCATC (Oslo Bø)

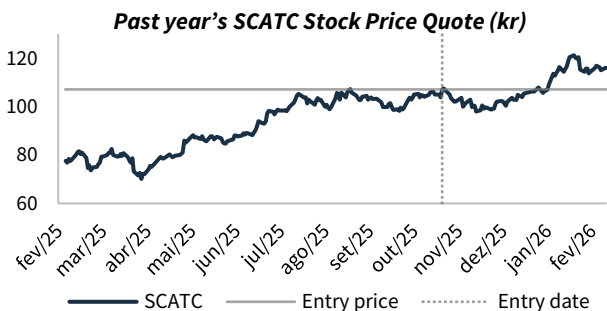
Sector: Energy

NOKUSD: 0.10 \$ (25/02/2026)



Introduction & Market Trend

On the 27th of October 2025 the Investment Team 4 presented **Scatec ASA**, a global leader in renewable energy generation specializing in solar, wind, and hybrid technologies across Emerging Markets. Since then, the stock has performed strongly, trading at **kr121.0 (+12.9%)** as of February 25th, 2026.



Investment Thesis

Scatec has a **dominant position** in the expanding solar energy sector across EM, with robust financial performance and significant upside potential. The company is executing a strategic **deleveraging plan**, allocating **NOK 4B** from asset sales to reduce net debt by 2027, which will improve its creditworthiness. With over 80% of capacity secured under long-term PPAs, it generates **strong and predictable free cash flows**. Scatec also offers strategic portfolio diversification, providing exposure to the energy sector **outside the US** market while capitalizing on the high-growth renewable energy transition in the emerging economies.

Source: Yahoo Finance, Financial Report FY 2024, [Grand View Research](#)

Company Overview

Scatec is a Norwegian renewable energy company headquartered in Oslo, operating across emerging markets. It develops, builds, owns, and operates renewable energy plants, with **6.2 GW** currently in operation across **15 developing countries**. Scatec covers the **entire project value chain**, from development and EPC construction to long-term operation and maintenance. The company's portfolio spans solar, wind, hydro, and battery storage technologies, with four core markets: **South Africa, Egypt, Brazil, and the Philippines**.

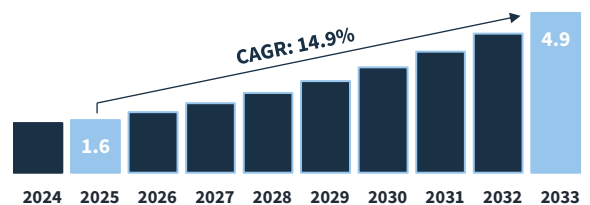
The company's business model relies on long-term **Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs)** spanning 15-20 years, which secure predictable revenue streams and minimizes exposure to electricity price volatility.

In addition, Scatec runs **Release**, a small division that rents ready-to-use PV and batteries to companies and utilities, allowing them to produce and store clean electricity without large upfront investments in a scalable way.

Industry Overview

The renewable energy sector is projected to grow at **14.9% CAGR until 2033**, driven by favorable government carbon policies, positioning Scatec for continued expansion.

Global Renewable Energy Market Size (in Trillion USD)



Regions such as Latin America and Africa are increasingly turning to solar and wind as they are **cheaper** and less dependent on imported fuels **than traditional fossil-based systems**.

In-Depth Asset Analysis

Scatec ASA

Financial Analysis

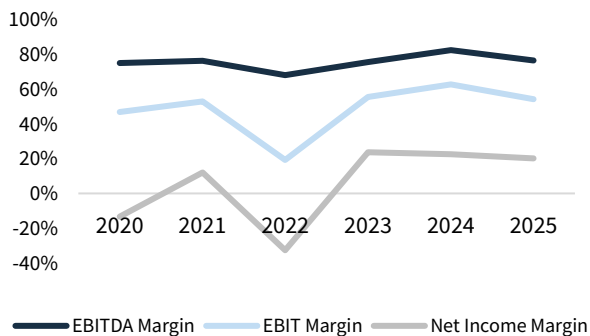
Scatec has delivered a clear financial recovery, strengthening its position as a renewable energy developer focused on high-growth emerging markets. Revenues grew at a **24% CAGR** between 2020 and 2024, reaching NOK 6.6 billion, with a strong 39% YoY increase in 2024 supported by new projects coming online and higher production capacity

Profitability has improved materially. **EBITDA margin** expanded from **68.1% in 2022 to 82.5% in 2024**, while **net margin recovered to 22.6%** after turning negative in 2022. This rebound reflects improved cost discipline, operating leverage, and the resilience of long-term contracted revenues under PPAs. In 2024, the company generated a **ROIC of 10.9%** and **ROE of 13.6%**, indicating solid capital efficiency within a capital-intensive sector.

Cash generation has strengthened meaningfully, with **operating cash flow of NOK 5.4 billion** and positive free cash flow of NOK 2.1 billion. **Net Debt/EBITDA declined to 4.6x**, and with dividends suspended and non-core asset divestments underway, management is actively **reducing leverage**.

This balance sheet focus reduces financial risk and enhances the company's capacity to fund future growth.

Margin Evolution



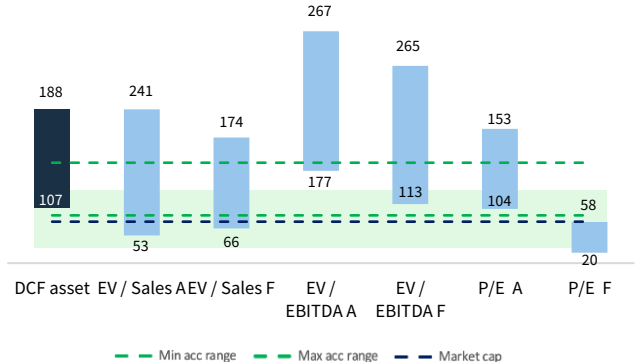
Valuation

Looking first at the relative valuation, the company trades at a discount across key metrics. **Scatec's P/E stands at 8.5x**, below the peer average of 15.9x, suggesting undervaluation on an earnings basis. Its **EV/EBITDA of 7.3x** compares to a sector average of 10.4x, and the company trades at **1.0x P/B** versus 1.6x for peers. While part of this discount may reflect leverage and emerging market exposure, the gap appears excessive given the recovery in profitability and improving cash flow generation.

Turning to intrinsic valuation, our DCF model applies a **terminal growth rate of 2%** and a **WACC of 8.7%**, reflecting Scatec's capital structure and blended cost of debt. Revenue growth is driven by capacity expansion in South Africa and Egypt, while margins remain supported by **long-term PPAs and operating leverage**. The model incorporates gradual deleveraging and sustained positive free cash flow over the forecast period.

Under these assumptions, the DCF indicates a **fair value above the current share price**, implying meaningful upside. As earnings normalize and leverage declines, the current valuation does not appear to fully reflect Scatec's long-term cash flow potential.

Football Field: Intrinsic and Multiple Valuation



In-Depth Asset Analysis

Silver (SLV)

Key Facts

Asset Class: Commodities

Market Cap: \$5.294 T

Ticker: SLV (NYSE)

Sector: Precious Metals

Currency: USD



Introduction & Market Trend

This in-depth asset analysis aims to discuss the **key drivers** behind the recommendation issued by the Macro Team regarding silver exposure through the **iShares Silver Trust (SLV)**. Silver occupies a **unique position among global commodities**, combining characteristics of both an **industrial metal and a monetary asset**.

At the time of the pitch, silver markets were entering a period of **tightening physical balances alongside accelerating structural demand** driven by electrification, expanding technological applications, and renewable energy deployments. Despite **supportive fundamentals, institutional participation and investment positioning remained historically subdued**, suggesting that market pricing had yet to fully reflect long-term structural dynamics.

Investment Thesis

The investment case for silver is supported by three reinforcing structural drivers: **constrained supply growth, expanding industrial demand, and improving macroeconomic conditions favourable to precious metals**.

First, global silver supply remains **structurally inelastic**. Approximately **70% of production is generated as a byproduct of copper, gold, and base-metal mining**, meaning higher prices do not directly incentivize new output.

Source: Silver Institute, Bloomberg

Declining ore grades, limited mining capital expenditure, and increasing ESG and social-license constraints further restrict meaningful supply expansion.

Second, **industrial demand continues to strengthen** and represents nearly two-thirds of total consumption. Growth in semiconductor production, photovoltaic installations, electric vehicles, and grid infrastructure reinforces **long-term demand visibility**. Silver's unmatched electrical and thermal conductivity makes **substitution technologically difficult**, meaning it is positioned as a **critical material** within the **global energy transition**.

Asset Overview

Silver derives value from a **combination of scarcity and unique physical properties**. It possesses the **highest electrical and thermal conductivity out of any metal**, alongside antimicrobial characteristics that support widespread industrial applications.

Unlike gold, which functions primarily as a monetary reserve asset, **silver benefits from dual demand exposure**. **Industrial uses provide structural demand** during economic expansion, while its **precious metal features allow it to act as a hedge** during periods of macroeconomic uncertainty. This **dual nature increases volatility but also enhances upside potential** across different economic regimes.

In-Depth Asset Analysis

Silver (SLV)

Industry Overview

The global silver market is characterized by concentrated production and structurally **constrained supply growth**. Mexico, China, and Peru remain dominant producers, with **mining** representing the **primary source of supply and recycling providing secondary flexibility**.

After **peaking in the mid-2010s, total supply declined** before stabilizing, with forecasts pointing toward **only modest growth in coming years**. Because most silver is produced as a **byproduct, supply expansion depends largely on broader base-metal investment cycles** rather than silver-specific economics.

Since 2021, the market has shifted into **sustained deficits**. While inventories initially absorbed shortages, several indicators now point toward **increasing physical tightness**. **London vault inventories have declined materially from prior peaks**, with freely available metal estimated to represent only a few weeks of global demand. **Lease rates, historically near zero, have periodically spiked to elevated levels**, and episodes of **backwardation** have emerged, **signalling stress in physical availability rather than purely financial pricing dynamics**.

Additionally, **refining and logistics bottlenecks** have constrained the supply of deliverable bars. Limited recasting capacity and shifting refinery priorities have contributed to regional price premiums and longer delivery timelines, **reinforcing tightening market conditions**.

Market Fundamentals

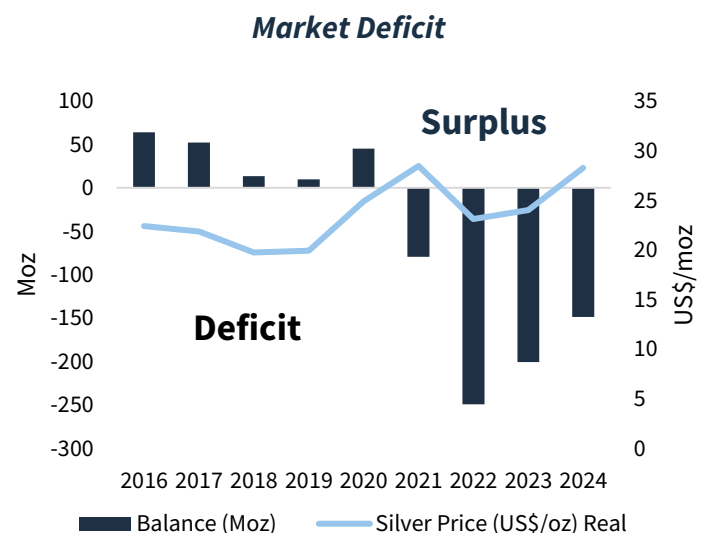
Silver **demand remains diversified** across **industrial fabrication, jewelry, investment,**

and residual **photographic** uses. Although total demand softened recently due to **weaker physical investment and consumer pressures, industrial demand reached record levels** and continues to represent the dominant structural driver.

Industrial fabrication growth is supported by **renewable energy expansion, artificial-intelligence-driven electronics demand, and electrification trends**. China and India remain key contributors to **industrial consumption growth**, while developed markets have shown more moderate expansion.

Jewelry demand fluctuates with economic cycles, while **photography** continues its **long-term structural decline due to digitalization**. **Physical investment demand weakened** amid elevated prices and cost-of-living pressures but is **expected to recover as macro uncertainty increases and monetary policy conditions ease**.

Despite cyclical variations in demand categories, **persistent supply deficits** indicate that **underlying market balances remain structurally supportive**.



In-Depth Analysis

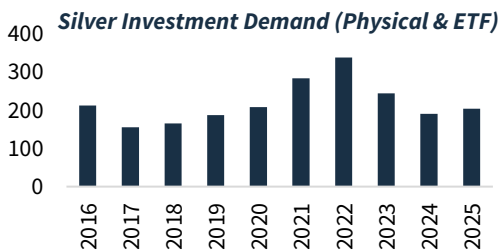
Silver (SLV)

Macro Environment

Silver performance is **closely linked to macroeconomic variables**, particularly **real interest rates, monetary policy expectations, and currency dynamics**. Historically, declining real yields and easing monetary cycles support precious metals by reducing the **opportunity cost of holding non-yielding assets**.

A structural shift in **global reserve behavior** also provides a supportive backdrop. Following recent geopolitical developments, **central banks have increased diversification toward hard assets, primarily gold**. Given silver's much smaller market size, even limited institutional or sovereign allocation could produce disproportionate price effects over time.

Silver also maintains a **strong long-term relationship with gold prices**, historically exhibiting **higher beta** during precious-metal cycles. While short-term divergences occur due to industrial exposure, gold typically establishes directional momentum that silver later amplifies.



Valuation

Unlike equities, silver cannot be valued using discounted cash flows or earnings multiples. Instead, **valuation was conducted through relative macro pricing frameworks**, primarily the historical relationship between gold and

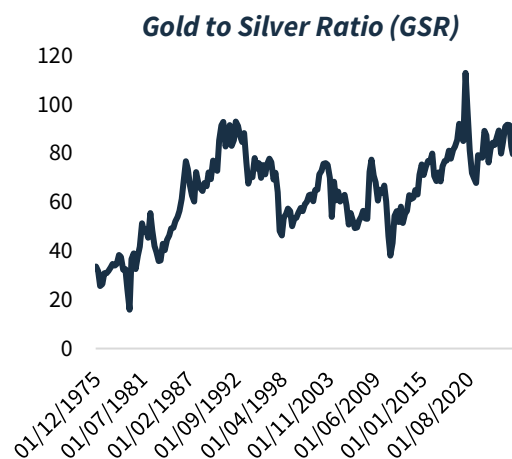
silver prices measured through the **gold-to-silver ratio (GSR)**.

The position was initiated on **24 November 2025**, when the gold-to-silver ratio remained elevated relative to historical norms, indicating silver was **undervalued compared to gold**. The investment team assumed a normalization of the ratio toward approximately **65**, consistent with **prior expansion phases of precious-metal cycles**.

Under the base macro scenario, gold approaching **\$5,000 per ounce** implied a corresponding silver price near **\$75 per ounce**, translating into an initial target of around **\$63.50 for SLV**.

This first target was achieved on **23 December 2025**, generating an approximate **40% return**. Following reassessment of market conditions, particularly persistent physical deficits and still-muted investor participation, the team elected to realize only half of the initial position, maintaining exposure to further upside.

Silver subsequently reached approximately **\$96 per ounce**, corresponding to around **\$86 for SLV**, where the second profit realization occurred on **20 January 2026**, generating an approximate **88% return** on that tranche.



OPINION



ALLESANDRO
DE RICCARDIS

The tokenized dollar and the new global financial architecture: an analysis of U.S crypto-strategic direction and public debt management

The tokenized dollar and the new global financial architecture

An analysis of U.S crypto-strategic direction and public debt management

Introduction

We are witnessing the most profound rewiring of the global monetary system since the gold standard was abandoned. At the heart of this shift is an interesting convergence: decentralised digital assets and U.S. sovereign debt. As the United States grapples with a historic public debt burden, equal to 38.740 trillion dollars as of February 27th 2026 and projected to hit 120% of GDP by 2036, technological innovations like stablecoins and tokenised assets have emerged as a powerful new demand sink for government liabilities. Concurrently, a political pivot following the 2024 elections has repositioned digital assets from speculative novelties to strategic pillars of national economic security. This report analyses the historical, macroeconomic, and geopolitical vectors driving the tokenisation of the U.S. dollar, and assesses whether this new architecture can sustainably manage the mounting U.S. debt.

The historical evolution of U.S. dollar dominance

The Bretton Woods System and the fiat transition

The architecture of modern dollar dominance was forged at the 1944 Bretton Woods conference in New Hampshire, which pegged international currencies to a dollar backed by gold (35\$ per ounce). The system functioned effectively for two decades, facilitating global trade and post-war reconstruction. However, the structural requirement for the United States to supply the world with sufficient dollar liquidity to facilitate international trade eventually clashed with its ability to maintain the gold peg: a macroeconomic paradox known as the Triffin dilemma. The Bretton Woods system of fixed convertibility persisted until 1971, when macroeconomic imbalances, rising domestic inflation, and gold reserve depletion

forced the United States to unilaterally suspend the dollar's convertibility into gold, transitioning the global economy into a pure fiat system. Dollar hegemony survived and thrived through the petrodollar system, which ensured structural global demand by pricing oil exclusively in dollars. This guaranteed that the U.S. could run persistent trade deficits without facing an immediate currency collapse, as foreign nations were forced to accumulate dollars to meet their energy needs.

The post-2008 financial crisis and quantitative easing

The 2008 financial crisis tested this dominance. While the dollar remained the ultimate haven, the subsequent era of aggressive Quantitative Easing (QE) altered global capital flows. Over time, the aggressive expansion of the U.S. monetary base and the weaponisation of the currency through geopolitical sanctions accelerated global diversification efforts. As a result, the dollar's share of global foreign exchange reserves has slowly but steadily declined from a peak of over 71% in 2000 to roughly 57.8% today.

Year	U.S. Dollar	Euro (pre-1999 ECU)	Japanese Yen	Pound Sterling
1970	84.85%	N/A	N/A	11.36%
1980	57.88%	17.46%	3.93%	2.40%
1990	47.14%	11.64%	9.40%	2.39%
2000	71.13%	18.29%	6.06%	2.75%
2024	57.80%	19.83%	5.82%	4.73%

Table 1 - Historical Currency composition of official foreign exchange reserves (%)

(IMF COFER dataset)

The tokenized dollar and the new global financial architecture *An analysis of U.S crypto-strategic direction and public debt management*

The Modern Macroeconomic Context

A \$38 trillion reality

This erosion of traditional central bank demand coincides with a fiscal trajectory that has reached a critical inflexion point. By February 2026, the gross national debt hit an astronomical \$38.74 trillion. Crucially, roughly 33% of all publicly held marketable debt is scheduled to mature within 12 months, creating a massive rollover requirement that leaves the Treasury highly sensitive to prevailing interest rates. Servicing this debt has become excruciatingly expensive. In January 2026 alone, interest expenses consumed \$426 billion, roughly 17% of total federal spending for the fiscal year.

Record date	Debt held by the public	Intragovernmental holdings	Total public debt outstanding
Feb 19, 2026	\$31,112,549,990,945	\$7,631,027,509,308	\$38,743,577,500,254
Feb 18, 2026	\$31,088,483,280,078	\$7,629,003,931,742	\$38,717,487,211,821
Feb 17, 2026	\$31,087,884,326,300	\$7,632,443,496,050	\$38,720,327,822,350

U.S. Treasury Debt, Fenny dataset

Projections are bleak. The Congressional Budget Office expects debt held by the public to climb to 120% of GDP by 2036, smashing the post-WWII record. Factoring in implicit obligations like Social Security and Medicare makes the actual burden much heavier. In this high-debt environment, the U.S. desperately needs a new, reliable buyer base to absorb its escalating Treasury issuance.

The rise of Digital Assets

Bitcoin vs Synthetic Dollars

To understand the government's crypto pivot, we must distinguish between non-sovereign digital commodities, such as Bitcoin, and fiat-collateralised digital tokens, known as stablecoins. Despite a massive market cap,

The rise of Digital Assets

Bitcoin's volatility keeps it from functioning as a reliable medium of exchange. Instead, it acts primarily as a highly speculative store of value and a sovereign hedge. Stablecoins, however, have emerged as the true "killer app" of blockchain technology.

Pegged to the U.S. dollar and collateralised by reserve assets, they function as synthetic digital dollars. By early 2026, the stablecoin market cap reached roughly \$300 billion, heavily dominated by Tether (USDT) and Circle (USDC). Stablecoins export dollar liquidity globally, with over 80% of transactions occurring outside the U.S. They combine the programmability and 24/7 accessibility of the blockchain with the macroeconomic stability of the greenback.

Furthermore, the institutional tokenisation of real-world assets (RWAs), specifically U.S. Treasuries, provides investors with risk-free yield combined with the operational benefits of fractional ownership and instant settlement. Major traditional finance (TradFi) institutions have already established dominance in this sector: products issued by BlackRock, Franklin Templeton, and Ondo account for roughly 69 per cent of the tokenised Treasury market, according to research. BlackRock's tokenised money market fund, deployed on the Ethereum blockchain, surpassed \$1 billion in assets under management within its first year, demonstrating the substantial and growing institutional appetite for on-chain, risk-free yield.

The tokenized dollar and the new global financial architecture

An analysis of U.S crypto-strategic direction and public debt management

The Political and Regulatory Paradigm Shift

U.S. crypto policy underwent a shift following the 2024 elections. Reversing his previous scepticism, the Trump administration actively embraced digital assets, aiming to make the U.S. the "crypto capital of the world".

This was formalised through the appointment of pro-crypto figures like Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and White House Crypto Czar David Sacks, signalling the end of regulatory hostility. In March 2025, Executive Order 14233 established the Strategic Bitcoin Reserve. It halted the sale of the government's 328,372 seized Bitcoins, positioning them as a permanent national asset to hedge against inflation and fiscal imbalances.

The Strategic Bitcoin Reserve is specifically restricted from liquidating its holdings, effectively removing a massive supply overhang from global markets. While this faced institutional pushback from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, the anticipated confirmation of Kevin Warsh as the next Fed Chair is expected to align the central bank closer to the administration's debt management goals.

Crucially, July 2025 saw the passage of the GENIUS Act, establishing the first complete federal regulatory framework for stablecoins. By mandating 1:1 backing with high-quality liquid assets like short-term Treasury bills, the Act effectively derisks the sector while hardwiring stablecoin demand directly into the U.S. government's funding apparatus. Complementing this, the FIT21 market structure bill granted the CFTC clear authority over spot market digital asset commodities, ending years of regulatory ambiguity.

Institutional Players and Treasury Market Integration

Stablecoins as the marginal buyer of U.S. debt

Stablecoins are rapidly becoming the marginal buyer of U.S. debt. By the end of October 2025, dollar-based

stablecoin issuers held an estimated \$155 billion in T-bills, roughly 2.5% of the total outstanding marketable U.S. Treasury bills.

Tether alone holds over \$120 billion in U.S. Treasuries: one of the largest global buyers of short-term government debt. Projections suggest the stablecoin market could hit \$2 trillion by 2028, generating up to \$1 trillion in fresh, net-new demand for U.S. T-bills. Because issuers require extreme liquidity to meet redemptions, this demand is hyper-concentrated in the short end of the yield curve, primarily targeting the 0-to-3-month sector.

To satisfy this immense appetite, the Treasury has the capacity to aggressively shift its financing from long-dated bonds to short-term bills. Analysts calculate this could allow the U.S. to suspend 30-year bond auctions entirely for up to three years, mechanically driving a "bull flattening" of the yield curve.

Global Implications and Geopolitics of Digital Money

The assertive deployment of the tokenised dollar has not occurred in a geopolitical vacuum. Control over blockchain infrastructure is the new frontier of global leverage. China recently executed a major redesign of its state-backed digital currency (e-CNY) to allow interest payments to its holders, making it a significantly stronger competitor to Western stablecoins as an international store of value. Simultaneously, the BRICS Pay network and the mBridge cross-border platform (which processed \$55 billion in transactions by early 2026) are actively building alternative plumbing systems designed to bypass the U.S.-dominated SWIFT network. Europe has countered with a dual-track strategy: it is developing a retail Digital Euro to protect its monetary sovereignty while implementing the MiCA framework to heavily regulate private stablecoins across the bloc. The global financial landscape is rapidly fracturing into competing technological islands.

The tokenized dollar and the new global financial architecture

An analysis of U.S crypto-strategic direction and public debt management

Forward-Looking Assessment

Can tokenisation truly manage the U.S. debt burden? While it expands the buyer base effortlessly, it introduces important systemic risks:

- Rollover exposure and fiscal dominance: shifting the national debt heavily toward short-term bills forces the Treasury to constantly refinance at prevailing market rates. If stablecoin demand falters, the U.S. faces massive rollover risks, potentially forcing the Federal Reserve to suppress rates just to prevent a sovereign debt crisis: a classic scenario of fiscal dominance.
- Contagion and "Phantom Liquidity": stablecoins operate 24/7/365, while traditional Treasury markets do not. A panic-driven redemption event (similar to the SVB-induced USDC depeg in 2023) could force issuers into emergency fire sales of T-bills. This could plunge the world's safest asset class into severe volatility, eroding the solvency of surrounding financial institutions.

Expectations for the near future

In the near-to-medium term, three scenarios are highly probable: 1. The institutionalisation of tokenised sovereignty: The GENIUS Act sparks massive corporate adoption. Major banks deploy proprietary stablecoins for cross-border settlement. Tokenised T-bills effectively synthesise a digital offshore dollar standard, expanding U.S. monetary hegemony and neutralising BRICS de-dollarisation efforts. 2. Yield curve engineering and market distortion: to feed stablecoin demand, the Treasury aggressively issues short-term bills, compressing term premiums. While this lowers

short-term interest costs, it severely heightens the volatility profile of the U.S. debt stack. 3. Geopolitical fragmentation: diverging regulatory frameworks (U.S. private stablecoins vs. China's state e-CNY vs. Europe's MiCA) fracture global liquidity pools. This will reverse decades of financial integration, turning digital ledgers into the primary battleground for geoeconomic leverage.

The Winners: Assets poised for Growth

As this structural shift accelerates, specific assets stand to benefit massively from the tailwinds of regulatory clarity and institutional adoption. Tokenised Real-World Assets (RWAs), particularly tokenised money market funds and U.S. Treasuries, are at the forefront. They benefit inherently because they solve traditional market frictions by offering 24/7 fractional ownership and near-instant settlement. McKinsey estimates that the tokenisation market could reach \$2 trillion by 2030, while Standard Chartered offers an even more aggressive forecast of a \$30 trillion tokenised asset market by 2034. Stablecoins themselves are also poised for explosive expansion, with Citi projecting total issuance could reach up to \$4 trillion by 2030 as they integrate deeply into global treasury operations and B2B settlements. Finally, Bitcoin remains a unique beneficiary; elevated by its new status within the U.S. Strategic Bitcoin Reserve, institutional asset managers like ARK Invest project that its cementing role as a sovereign hedge could drive its value to a base case of roughly \$710,000 per coin by the end of the decade.

The tokenized dollar and the new global financial architecture

An analysis of U.S crypto-strategic direction and public debt management

A Glimpse into the future

When the dust settles and these changes are fully formalised, the global economy will look different. The world is moving toward a reality where global finance runs “on-chain”, meaning traditional silos between banking hours and geographic borders will largely evaporate into a 24/7, always-on ecosystem. In this new scenario, the U.S. dollar will likely retain its overarching hegemony, but its form will be entirely digital. Rather than relying on clunky, expensive correspondent banking networks like SWIFT, billions of users worldwide will hold and transact in programmable digital dollars on their smartphones. While geopolitical rivals like China and the EU will maintain their own walled-garden digital currencies (e-CNY and the Digital Euro), the sheer accessibility and yield-bearing utility of the tokenised U.S. dollar will effectively export American monetary policy directly to the global retail public. It will be a world geographically fragmented by regulation, but economically bound together by the instantaneous speed of tokenised assets.

Conclusion

The tokenisation of the U.S. dollar is the 21st-century equivalent of the petrodollar system. By leveraging stablecoins and blockchain technology, the U.S. is securing a massive, captive, and globally distributed buyer base for its escalating sovereign debt. However, outsourcing the distribution of public debt to decentralised networks permanently alters global risk dynamics. Tokenisation provides vital near-term liquidity, but it directly tethers the stability of the U.S. Treasury market to the operational resilience of crypto issuers and the behavioural whims of digital retail populations worldwide. For portfolio managers and

institutional allocators, recognising this dual nature, a powerful tool for fiscal distribution that brings unprecedented, 24/7 systemic volatility, will be the defining mandate of the coming decade.

CLUB ACTIVITIES



CAROLINA PEREIRA



STEFAN MARQUÊS



GUILHERME ASCENSÃO

Financial Markets Compass 2025

The first edition of the largest Iberian student-led Finance conference

After months of hard work and preparation, the Portfolio Management Club brought to life a long-standing milestone: **the first edition of many more to come of the most ambitious Finance conference in Iberia.**



FINANCIAL MARKETS COMPASS - RECAP



Joined by **300 students and Finance professionals**, with **19 speakers** from all across the globe and from different sectors within finance, the Financial Markets Compass was, in the words of every attendee, a huge success.

To set the tone for the event, we were joined by **Nova SBE's Dean, Pedro Oliveira**, who highlighted the importance of student involvement in the industry. He was then followed by **João Rui Ferreira, Secretary of State for Economy**, who left us with a remarkable video that highlighted the challenging environment we are in, and the importance of thoughtful discussion to navigate uncertainty.

The Role of Financial Literacy in Shaping the Future of Finance



The first panel of the day, moderated by **Professor Miguel Ferreira**, brought to the table one of the most pressing topics in today's world, particularly in the Portuguese context: **financial literacy**.

Professor Miguel Ferreira moderated a discussion with **Rita Piçarra** (Former CFO of Microsoft Portugal & Book Author), **Francisca Oliveira** (Board Member at Banco de Portugal) and **Inês Drumond** (Vice Chair at CMVM) for a thoughtful discussion on the trends and underlying struggles that are negatively impacting financial literacy, and what we can all do to address those, highlighting the importance of a financially literate population for economic growth and overall human development.

Financial Markets Compass 2025

The first edition of the largest Iberian student-led Finance conference

Revolutionising Investments Through AI

Private Equity: A means of fostering the growth of SMEs

REVOLUTIONIZING INVESTMENTS THROUGH AI

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AFONSO JANUÁRIO
VP OF QUANT RESEARCH
AT SANTANDER AM

RAUL LEOTE DE CARVALHO
HEAD OF QUANT RESEARCH AT BNP
PARIBAS AM

IVO BERNARDO
CO-FOUNDER & SENIOR DATA
SCIENTIST AT DAREDATA

RECAP

FMÇ
Financial Markets Compass

Afonso Januário (VP of Quant Research at Santander Asset Management) was joined on stage, for the second panel of the afternoon, by **Raul Leote de Carvalho** (Head of Quant Research at BNP Paribas Asset Management, coming from Paris) and Ivo Bernardo (Co-founder and Senior Data Scientist at DareData), to discuss the future of AI and Tech and its expected impact in Finance.

Artificial Intelligence stood at the core of the conversation, with the speakers sharing **how AI is, and will, revolutionise their daily work, alongside how suppliers of AI solutions can create products that meet the needs of leading players in Finance.**

Closing with an intense round of Q&A by the audience, the panel came across as truly insightful, with leading experts in the matter.

PRIVATE EQUITY: A MEANS OF FOSTERING THE GROWTH OF SMEs

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LUÍS MOTA DUARTE
DEPUTY CEO AT SONAE
SIERRA

HECTOR PEREZ
DEPUTY MANAGING
PARTNER AT BRIDGE POINT

JORGE RAMOS
HEAD OF INVESTMENT
BANKING IBERIA AT CITI

ANTONIO BERNARDO
SENIOR PARTNER AND FOUNDER
OF VIBE CAPITAL FOUNDERS

RECAP

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Financial Markets Compass

Bringing together an international group of seasoned professionals in the Corporate Finance world, **Professor Luís Mota Duarte** (Deputy CEO at Sonae Sierra) challenged the speakers both on the professional and personal side to share their perspectives on the **best practices and trends that make Private Equity a value-adding vehicle for SMEs.**

António Bernardo (former Deputy CEO at Roland Berger and now Senior Partner and Founder of Vibe Capital Partners), alongside **Héctor Pérez** (Deputy Managing Partner at Bridgepoint) and **Jorge Ramos** (Head of Investment Banking Iberia at Citi), shared their perspectives on the levers of returns in Private Equity and how the attention to the underlying portfolio companies has changed over the years. Furthermore, students in the audience were given unparalleled career advice.

Financial Markets Compass 2025

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The Past, Present, and Future of Global Markets



For the last panel, **Diogo Malato Moura** (Head of CIB at BNP Paribas Portugal) and **André Themudo** (Head of Wealth and Assets Managers at BlackRock Iberia) shared their vast experience in Global Markets, sharing how the uncertainty that is present in markets will impact the daily lives of Finance professionals, leaving some insights on the expected evolution of the field.

In a panel moderated by **Jorge Sousa Teixeira** (CEO of BPI Gestão de Ativos), the attendees were engaged in an hour-long discussion that came to an end with a thoughtful round of Q&A from the audience, which asked questions both on **the evolution of markets and Asset Management, as well as on the perception from the investor side on how to navigate such uncertain and unforeseeable market conditions.**

Closure



Before heading off to a Networking Dinner & Cocktail, we were joined by **Marcos Soares Ribeiro** (President of CFA Society Portugal), who closed the afternoon with a thoughtful keynote speech which covered all topics discussed, drafting a **final piece of advice for everyone wanting to pursue a successful career in Finance.**

Acknowledgements

We are deeply grateful to all those who supported PMC in bringing the Financial Markets Compass 2025 to life. To our Sponsors and Partners (**BPI Gestão de Ativos, Euronext, CFA Society Portugal, Nova SU, Nova SBE and Finanças Para Todos**), to our Professor-Ambassadors (**Miguel Ferreira, Afonso Januário, Luís Mota Duarte, António Bernardo and Jorge Sousa Teixeira**), and especially to the **team of PMCs who tirelessly worked to make the event a huge success**, we give you a heartfelt thank you.

International Trip

Luxembourg Asset & Wealth Management Week

Inside Luxembourg's Financial Hub

From June 11th to June 14th, the Portfolio Management Club had the unique opportunity to explore one of Europe's most important financial hubs, Luxembourg. Over four intensive and inspiring days, we visited leading financial institutions alongside ANESEC, a Luxembourg based student association, marking PMC's first international collaboration and study trip.

ANESEC is a national association that brings together students in economics and management with professionals and companies operating locally and internationally. Its mission is to strengthen the connection between students and the professional world. This partnership provided the perfect framework for a meaningful academic and professional exchange.

The focus of our trip was asset and wealth management, allowing us to explore the broader landscape of the industry and gain a better understanding of its main activities, institutions, and career paths. In collaboration with ANESEC, we carefully selected the leading firms in the industry to give students a comprehensive view of career paths, market dynamics, and the realities of working in international financial institutions.



Day 1 - Global Leaders in Wealth Management

Our first day began with visits to HSBC and UBS, two global leaders in private banking and global wealth management.

At HSBC, we were welcomed by Caroline Buhagiar, Head of Human Resources in Luxembourg, who presented the various internship and student opportunities available during academic breaks. The session was followed by a technical presentation led by Cameron McLean, Chief Financial officer in Luxembourg, who walked us through real life examples of financial and regulatory reporting, budgeting, and forecasting. This practical perspective gave students valuable insight into the operational side of financial institutions.



Our visit to UBS proved particularly memorable. We had the privilege of meeting the Head of Portugal at UBS, who happened to be in Luxembourg. This encounter opened the door to future collaboration between PMC and UBS Portugal, including potential office visits and joint events. The session also provided a clear picture of UBS's approach to global wealth management and the skills required to succeed in such a competitive environment.

International Trip

Luxembourg Asset & Wealth Management Week

Day 2 – From Public Investment to Active Asset Management

The second day started at the European Investment Bank, where we gained an overview of its role in financing projects across multiple sectors and supporting economic development across Europe. One key takeaway was Luxembourg's strategic importance as the largest investment fund centre in Europe and the second largest worldwide.

A particularly inspiring moment came from Miguel Alves, a NOVA SBE alumnus currently working in Mandate Management in Equity. He shared his academic journey, his transition to an international career, and insights into the role of the European Investment Fund. His experience strongly resonated with students considering opportunities abroad.



Later that day, we visited Nordea Asset Management, one of the largest asset managers in the Nordic region with a strong global presence. This session stood out for its interactive format: analysts François Passant and Johannes Haubrich challenged us with real-life case discussions and practical questions, allowing participants to better understand portfolio construction, risk considerations, and the decision-making process behind asset allocation.

During the networking session, we discovered that several NOVA students had previously interned or started their careers at Nordea Luxembourg, including alumni Maria Teixeira, who joined us to share her experience. This reinforced the strong connection between NOVA SBE and Luxembourg's financial ecosystem.



Day 3 – Inside Private Banking

On the final day, we had the privilege of visiting Quintet Private Bank, a well-established institution specialising in wealth management for private clients and families.

The visit included a series of expert panels covering multiple areas of private banking. Ilario Attasi, Head of Investment and Client Solutions Group, provided insights into investment strategies and portfolio construction, while Cyrlique Bourbon discussed portfolio management practices. We also had the opportunity to learn about regional market dynamics with Mads Midtgaard, Market Head for the Nordic countries. The session concluded with a discussion on direct equities led by Elise Letard and Emanuele Baudanza, another NOVA SBE alumnus.

International Trip

Luxembourg Asset & Wealth Management Week

Day 3 – Inside Private Banking (cont.)

These discussions offered a comprehensive view of the private banking value chain and highlighted the importance of combining technical expertise, market understanding, and strong client relationships.

In the afternoon, we joined PMC and ANESEC alumni for a networking session. This informal exchange allowed us to hear personal career stories, learn about the challenges of building an international career, and better understand what it takes to succeed in a multicultural professional environment. Luxembourg's international nature was evident, with professionals from diverse backgrounds working together across languages and cultures.

Key Takeaways and Future Perspectives

This trip confirmed Luxembourg's position as one of Europe's leading financial centres, offering unique opportunities across asset management, private banking, and investment services. We were also strongly impressed by the significant presence of NOVA alumni who have built successful careers in Luxembourg after completing their studies in Portugal. It was particularly inspiring to see the positions and responsibilities held by professionals who were once in our shoes.

Hearing their stories was both motivating and reassuring, encouraging many students to consider international career paths. Beyond the office visits, we also had the opportunity to explore the city and experience its dynamic and international atmosphere.

Together with ANESEC members, we visited key landmarks such as the Chambre des Députés and explored Kirchberg, the city's financial district, home to many of Luxembourg's most prestigious institutions. These shared experiences strengthened team cohesion within PMC and helped build meaningful connections between our two clubs.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to ANESEC for their collaboration and warm welcome. This partnership brought together two student communities to create a valuable learning experience filled with professional insights and meaningful connections.

The Portfolio Management Club aims to expand its international initiatives and strengthen its relationship with ANESEC. This trip marks the beginning of what we hope will be many future collaborations, projects, and international opportunities for our members.



International Trip

Bonus Section – London Field Trip 2026

This February, the Portfolio Management Club embarked on its first-ever field trip to London, marking a milestone moment in the club's history. Over three packed days, a group of Nova SBE students had the rare opportunity to go behind the scenes of some of the world's most prestigious financial institutions, gaining insights that no classroom could replicate. From boutique advisory firms to global investment banks and the very institution that steers the UK's monetary policy, the trip offered a panoramic view of finance in one of its most important capitals.



Day 1 – Raine Group, Brown Advisory, and Bloomberg

The trip kicked off with a visit to **Raine Group**, where Jason Schretter, Partner and Head of EMEA, gave the group a candid look at the world of technology, media, and telecoms advisory from the perspective of a leading boutique. The afternoon took the group to **Brown Advisory**, where Portfolio Manager Oliver Burke, Fixed Income Trader Felix Miralles, and Sales Director Harry Jebb walked students through their investment philosophy and the realities of portfolio construction in today's market environment. The day closed at **Bloomberg's** iconic London office, demonstrating the depth of the terminal and its role in modern

investment decision-making. A fitting end to an intense first day.



Day 2 – Bank of England, Citi

Day two brought arguably the most distinctive visit of the trip: the **Bank of England**. Students got acquainted with Data Science, Quantitative Risk Analysis and Research, offering a fascinating perspective on how data and quantitative methods underpin central banking decisions and financial stability work. The afternoon shifted to the fast-paced world of **Citi**, where the session was split across Investment Banking and Markets. On the IB side, two Associates and an Analyst offered a ground-level view of deal execution, while on the Markets floor, a Sales VP, a Trading VP, and a Trading Associate brought to life what it means to operate in global capital markets day to day.

International Trip

Bonus Section – London Field Trip 2026

Day 3 – Santander, London Stock Exchange Group, Alumni Networking

The final day rounded off the experience with visits to two institutions with deep roots in the real economy. At **Santander**, a Managing Director led the session on Corporate Banking, while an Investment Banking VP and an associate shared their experiences on the deal side: a perspective particularly resonant given Santander's strong ties to the Iberian market. The trip concluded at the **London Stock Exchange Group**, a symbolic and fitting final stop that tied together everything the students had absorbed across the three days, from trading and risk to advisory and policy.



To close out the trip on a high note, the final evening brought together over ten PMC alumni working across a diverse range of industries and companies for an informal networking dinner. In a relaxed setting with drinks in hand and light bites to share, the atmosphere was a far cry from the polished boardrooms of the previous days, and all the better for it. Conversations flowed freely, with alumni opening up about their career journeys, the pivots they didn't see

coming, and the lessons they wished they'd known as students. For many in the group, it was one of the most valuable moments of the entire trip: unscripted, honest, and a powerful reminder of the strength of PMC's network. It was the perfect way to end three remarkable days in London.



PMC's first London Field Trip was, by every measure, an extraordinary success. The generosity of every speaker who gave their time, shared their experiences, and engaged so openly with students made the trip far more than a series of office visits. It was a genuine window into the industry. The club looks forward to making London a recurring chapter in its calendar.



Events in Review

A glimpse into last year's events

AmplifyME M&A Finance Accelerator Simulation

The year began with the third edition of **AmplifyME's Finance Accelerator Simulation**. This year's session focused on Mergers and Acquisitions, using an immersive simulation to assess students based on merit and technical ability.

With over **80 participants** in attendance, the event offered a hands-on look into the day-to-day responsibilities of an Investment Banker. Beyond this, top performers were invited to join AmplifyME's Investment Banking Academy, with the added benefit of **direct referrals to UBS**.

Office Visit to Iberis Capital

PMC had the unique opportunity to visit the offices of Iberis Capital, a **leading private equity and venture capital firm**. The experience was highly interactive, as participants worked through a specialised Private Equity Case that covered critical industry topics ranging from valuation to deal-making.



Bloomberg Learning Sessions

PMC hosted **three Bloomberg Terminal Learning Sessions**, providing students with an incredible opportunity to master one of the world's most sophisticated financial tools. Led by three Bloomberg representatives, these live, interactive sessions guided participants through the essential functions of the Terminal.

The sessions covered **Equities, Fixed Income Research and Macro Analysis**, as well as **Portfolio Management and Risk Analytics**, and even **Bloomberg Query Language (BQL)**. These sessions allowed students to learn directly from seasoned experts and elevate their technical proficiency.

Office Visit to BNP Paribas

Once again, our members were treated to an exclusive morning at the offices of BNP Paribas. This visit provided a rare look into the inner workings of **Global Banking**. Students had the chance to connect with professionals across various departments, including **Investment Banking and Credit Analysis**.



Events in Review

A glimpse into last year's events

Office Visits to Kearney and Mastercard

In the second semester, club members visited two offices in Lisbon, aimed at broadening their exposure to management consulting.

At **Kearney**, a leading global management consulting firm, members gained insight into how consultants approach and solve complex strategic challenges for their clients. The visit was particularly noteworthy as **Daniel Gonçalves**, Business Analyst at Kearney and former PMC President, led the session and presented a tailored consulting case, offering a practical and engaging perspective on the consulting workflow.



The visit to **Mastercard's Lisbon hub** was organised in collaboration with **NOVA Women in Business**. The session featured a panel discussion with consultants from different functional tracks, alongside the Country Manager. These conversations provided diverse viewpoints on strategy, career development, and the evolving landscape of the financial industry, sparking curiosity and reflection on future career paths.



BlackRock Annual Event 2025

PMC had the privilege of attending **BlackRock Lisbon Annual Event 2025**, featuring insightful discussions led by senior BlackRock leaders such as Sarah Melvin (Head of UK and European Client Business) and Alex Brazier (Global Head of Investment and Portfolio Solutions). The event explored key themes including the evolving global wealth landscape, geopolitics, infrastructure, and the transformative role of AI in systematic investing. The club extends its sincere thanks to **Professor Jorge Sousa Teixeira** for the invitation.



PwC Case Challenge III

Building on the success of its previous editions, we launched the **3rd Edition of the Case Challenge**, with **PwC Financial Services**. Over 150 participants got the opportunity to solve a case focused on **IFRS 9 Impairment**. Following the submission of case solutions and final presentations at PwC's offices, **10 summer internships** were awarded to the top-performing participants. A heartfelt thank you goes out to João Gravito (Partner) and Miguel Chapado (Manager) for their continued trust.



Events in Review

A glimpse into last year's events

External Projects with Explorer Investments

Portfolio Management Club developed **industry research projects with Explorer Investments**.

10 members analysed the national market, focusing on key sectors and assessing relevant performance indicators from the perspective of different fund types, including venture capital, growth equity, and buyouts.

Participants were mentored by **António Rocha e Silva** (Growth Partner) and **Gonçalo Arruda Pereira** (Growth Investment Professional), whose guidance was invaluable. These projects concluded with presentations at their offices and the delivery of comprehensive research reports.



Guest Speakers

Throughout the academic year, we had the privilege of welcoming several distinguished guest speakers who shared their professional journeys and practical advice. We hosted several speakers, and a few are highlighted below.

One of our guest speakers was **Caetano Oliveira**, the youngest partner at Vibe Capital Partners, with experience at Novo Banco, Oxy Capital and Goldman Sachs. Academically, he has a background in engineering and a Master's in Finance from Imperial College London. He discussed his career progression, explaining how he reached a partner position at such a young age.

He emphasised the importance of overcoming imposter syndrome, noting that holding a high-responsibility position is the result of trust placed in you by others. He also spoke about the risks involved in major career decisions, such as his return to Lisbon to help build a company from scratch, stressing that true commitment requires full dedication to "Plan A", without relying on a fallback option.

Another session featured **João Calado**, focused on the role of Investor Relations. Currently, as an asset manager at Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, João Calado shared insights from his experience in investor relations at CTT. He explained the critical importance of this role in managing communication between companies and investors, highlighting the need to balance optimistic expectations with realistic outcomes.



Finally, we had the honour of hosting **Vítor Constâncio**, former Vice-President of the European Central Bank, who has previously served as Minister of Finance and Governor of the Bank of Portugal. His presentation, titled "Future Challenges for Monetary Policy and Central Banks", provided an overview of the evolving role of central banks, addressing the complexities of maintaining financial stability in an uncertain global environment.

Events in Review

A glimpse into last year's events

Volunteering at Banco Alimentar

For the first time, in collaboration with the **Leadership for Impact** club, PMC dedicated a morning to **volunteering at Banco Alimentar Contra a Fome**, contributing to the organisation and distribution of food donations. Members actively supported the sorting, packing, and preparation of essential food baskets. This initiative provided a meaningful opportunity to contribute to a cause with a direct impact on the local community, while also fostering **teamwork** and a sense of **social responsibility**.



Finanças Para Todos

Finanças para Todos welcomed a 10th-grade class from Escola Secundária Quinta do Marquês as part of the #UnlocktheNextLevel project organised by Nova SBE. The young economics students learned about savings and investments, helping them build strong financial habits for the future. PMC organised a **financial literacy workshop**, which concluded with a **hands-on simulation** where students made their own decisions about consumption, saving, and investing to reach financial goals.



Team Building Activities



Alumni Dinner



Thank you!

We appreciate your time and hope you enjoyed reading our newsletter. Feel free to contact us at portfoliomanagementclub@novasbe.pt.

Corporate and Academic Partners



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