

Global Wealth & Investment Management Survey

What we heard from the thundering herd: 10th annual edition

#1 risk according to advisors: Geopolitics

In a prescient pivot from 2025, and ahead of the weekend's US/Israel/Iran strikes, advisors in this year's survey (conducted 1/28 to 2/23, 363 responses) cited geopolitics as the biggest risk to equities. High government debt was cited as a close second (and bond allocations are at survey lows.). Geopolitical shocks over the last decade were, in retrospect, buying opportunities - the S&P 500 sold off ~10% on average but more than recovered within 3 months (see [Global Viewpoint](#)). But is today's set up different?

Lower cash balances may mean less dips bought

Key risks to the S&P index (and to mega cap Tech) are less sideline cash and higher allocations to Tech/AI. Fund managers' cash balances sit at record lows, cash balances cited by advisors have dropped to 7%, the lowest since 2022, The last time cash balances were this low, cash's real return was half of today's. Equity allocations are not yet at euphoric levels like 2008's or 2000;s, but equity bulls are back (more below).

Clients increasingly more bullish than advisors

For the last several years, clients and advisors have either agreed on equity market direction or financial advisors were decidedly more bullish than clients. This year, 33% of clients are more bullish than advisors, still less than the proportion of advisors more bullish than clients (47%) but the gap has narrowed to decade lows.

Advisors less bullish Tech, more bullish on everything else

77% of respondents think the bull market continues beyond 2026 (more than last year) and just 3% think the market has peaked. But a leadership shift is expected: 39% of respondents expect mega cap Tech to outperform in 2026 (vs. half last year), despite that 3 of the top 5 holdings of FA accounts are mega cap Tech. Advisors are more bullish on Industrials and Financials, grew most positive on Materials & Energy, and are most bearish on Discretionary. Advisors like Value>Growth by the widest margin since 2023.

Advisors expect a strong economy, capex>consumption

78% expect above-trend GDP this year (vs. two-thirds last year), and 78% are bullish on business spending amid a capex cycle, the most bullish reading for capex in our survey history, vs. 22% expect the consumer to lead, a record low in our survey history. (We agree.) On the cycle, respondents say "mid" or "late", but lack of consensus here is consistent with our US Regime Model's muddled macro signals over the last two years.

Views on alts, gold; Fed, potential tax hit and more inside

Despite negative headlines, exposure/appetite for alternatives sits at all-time highs. Advisors expect two rate cuts this year, in line with consensus. Gold is more broadly held than ever, perhaps as an inflation/geopolitical hedge. But after 2025's strong equity gains, high turnover and aggressive retail participation, we worry s-t capital gains could be the negative tax surprise that offsets the well telegraphed positive of higher refunds.

Trading ideas and investment strategies discussed herein may give rise to significant risk and are not suitable for all investors. Investors should have experience in relevant markets and the financial resources to absorb any losses arising from applying these ideas or strategies.

BofA Securities does and seeks to do business with issuers covered in its research reports. As a result, investors should be aware that the firm may have a conflict of interest that could affect the objectivity of this report. Investors should consider this report as only a single factor in making their investment decision.

Refer to important disclosures on page 28 to 30.

02 March 2026

Equity and Quant Strategy
United States

BofA

Data
Analytics



Savita Subramanian
Equity & Quant Strategist
BofAS
+1 646 855 3878
savita.subramanian@bofa.com

Victoria Roloff
Equity & Quant Strategist
BofAS
+1 646 743 6339
victoria.roloff@bofa.com

Jill Carey Hall, CFA
Equity & Quant Strategist
BofAS
+1 646 855 3327
jill.carey@bofa.com

Nicholas Samoyedny, CFA
Equity & Quant Strategist
BofAS
+1 646 855-5717
nicholas.samoyedny@bofa.com

Alex Makedon
Equity & Quant Strategist
BofAS
+1 646 855 5982
alex.makedon@bofa.com

10th annual GWIM survey

We surveyed Merrill financial advisors from around the country from January 28 - February 23, 2026, and received responses from 363 advisors. We asked the advisors 31 questions intended to better understand their views and preferences across asset classes, sectors and style; we have compiled their responses in this report.

10th annual GWIM Survey

With the help of the Wealth Management Marketing Research team, we conducted our tenth annual survey of Merrill financial advisors (FAs) from across the US. We asked 31 questions intended to better understand advisors' views and preferences across asset classes, sectors and style (see Appendix for more details). Our survey was open from January 28 – February 23, 2026, and received responses from 363 advisors with an average industry tenure of 19 years, and with 75% of them managing household assets in excess of \$100mn.

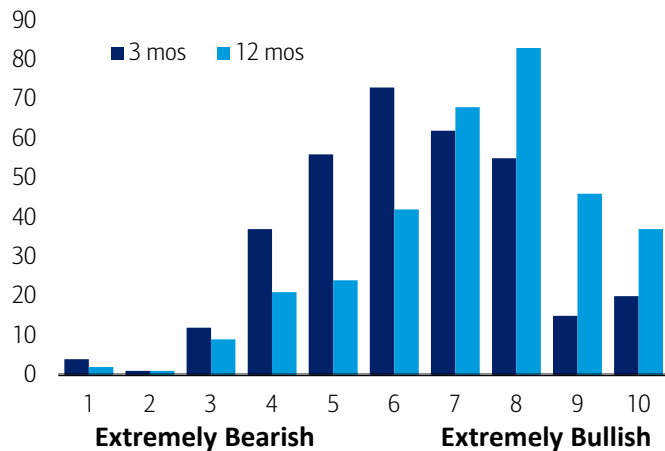
Merrill advisors on equities

Advisors are bullish on equities

- **Only slightly less bullish than last year's post-COVID high:** On a scale of 1 (Extremely Bearish) to 10 (Extremely Bullish), the average advisor's sentiment score over the next three months clocked in at 6.3, slightly below last year's 6.5 but the 2nd highest since 2020.
- **More bullish over N12m than a year ago:** Sentiment around 12-month returns averaged at 7.2, up from 6.9 last year but below 2024's high of 7.5.

Exhibit 1: More bullish than bearish in both near- and long-term

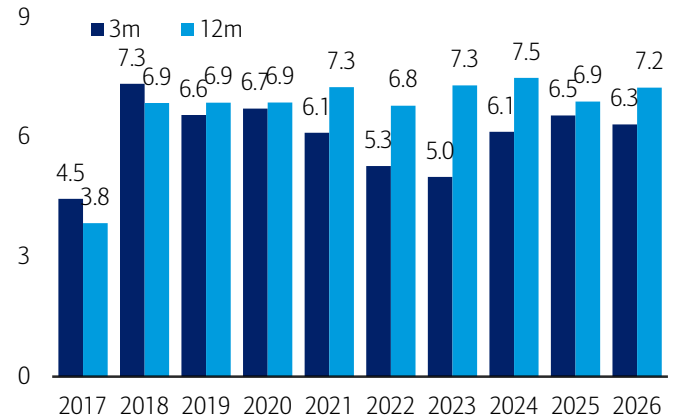
How bullish or bearish are you over the next 3 months and 12 months? (1=Extremely Bearish, 10=Extremely Bullish)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 2: Less near-term bullish but more long-term bullish than this time last year

Average score of respondents (1=Extremely Bearish, 10=Extremely Bullish) based on 3-month and 12-month time frames



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

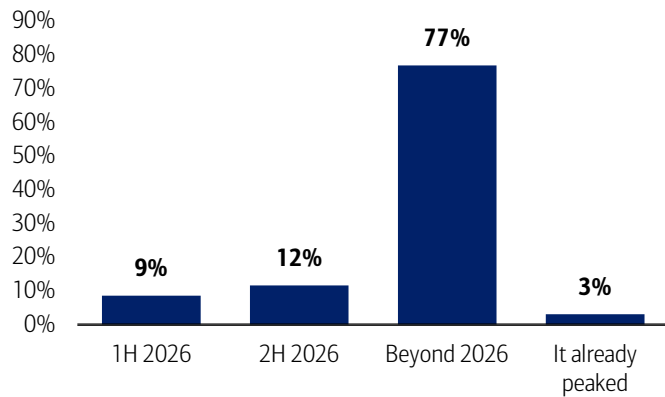
Advisors expect the bull market to continue beyond 2026

- **77% think the bull market continues beyond 2026:** Only 3% of respondents said the market already peaked. Last year, 70% expected the bull market to continue beyond 2025.
- **FAs remain more bullish than clients:** 47% of respondents said they are more bullish than the average client, slightly above 45% last year, and 33% said they are equally bullish as their clients, similar to last year's 34%.



Exhibit 3: FAs expect the bull market to continue beyond 2026

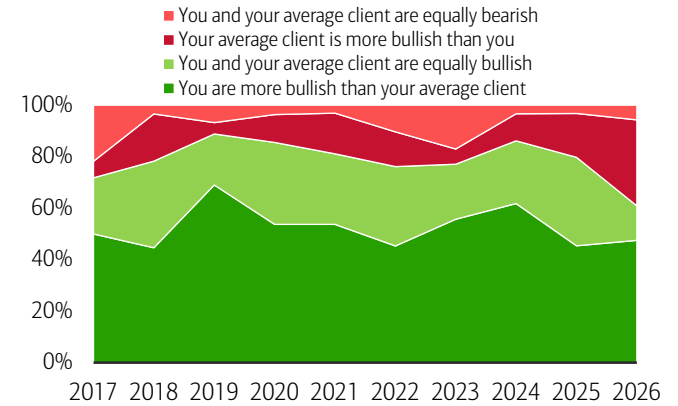
When do you expect the U.S. equity market will peak (signaling the end of this bull market)?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 4: Advisors are still more bullish than clients

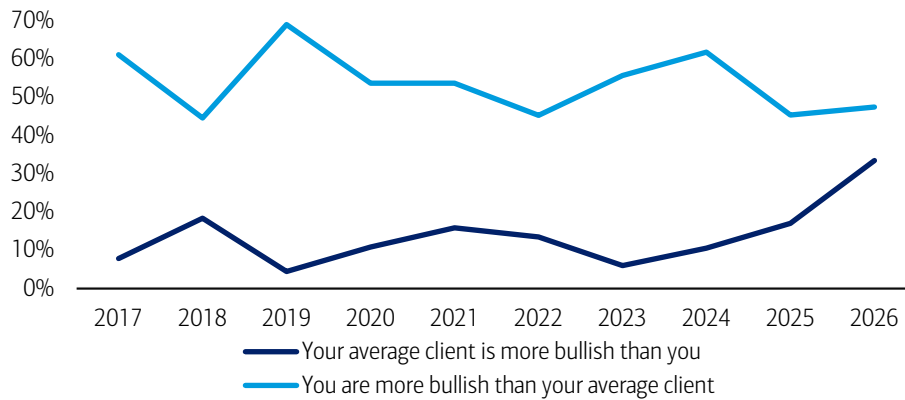
Which of the following statements is most accurate?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 5: Signs of capitulation: a record proportion of clients are more bullish than their advisors

% of respondents indicating “your average client is more bullish than you” vs. “you are more bullish than your average client”



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

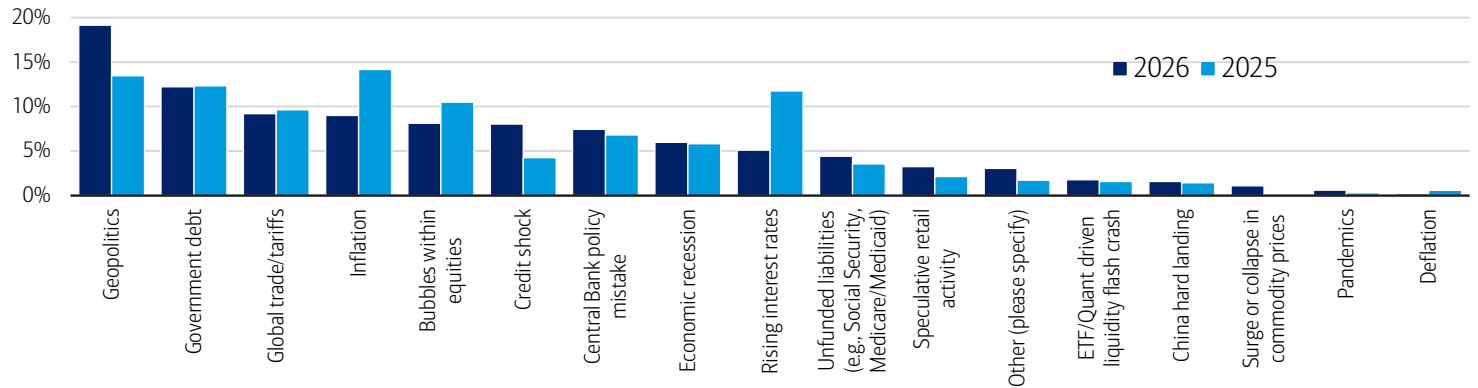
Biggest risk? Geopolitics, then government debt. Inflation/rate risk waning

- Geopolitics (19%) and government debt (12%) were cited as the biggest risks to the market, followed by global trade/tariffs (9%) – though geopolitics saw the biggest uptick (from 13%/#2 last year).
- Inflation had been the second most cited risk last, but together with risk of rising interest rates saw the biggest decline in responses this year.
- Credit shock saw the biggest YoY increase in responses (8% vs. 4% last year).



Exhibit 6: Advisors see geopolitics and government debt as the biggest risks to equities, vs. inflation and geopolitics last year

Which of the following do you view as the biggest risk to U.S. equities? (Select up to three)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

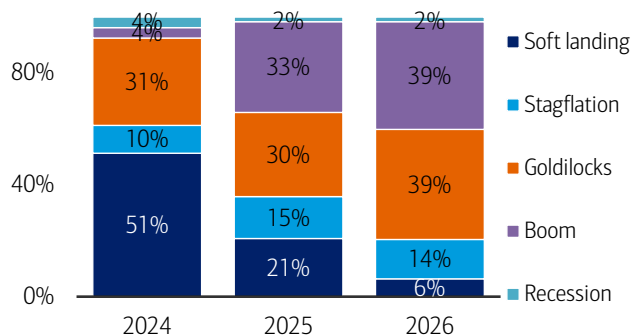
Merrill advisors on macro

Advisors are bullish on the economy

- **78% expect above-trend GDP this year (vs. two-thirds last year)**, with respondents equally split about whether that above-trend growth is accompanied by inflation or disinflation. Only 2% expect a recession this year (the same as last year).
- **More green shoots in the economy.** 69% of advisors said they see more green shoots in the economy, up slightly from 65% last year.

Exhibit 7: Nearly 80% expect above-trend GDP this year vs. two-thirds of respondents last year

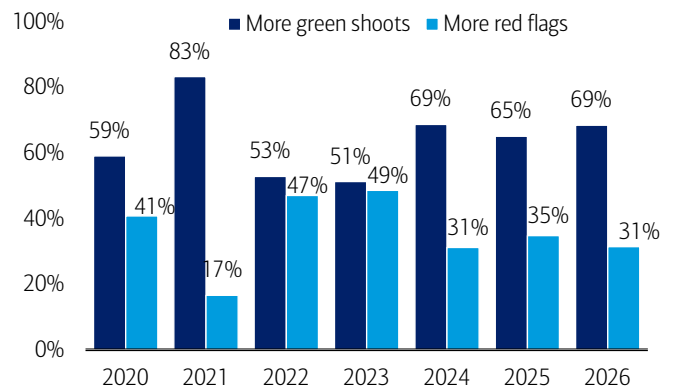
What is your view on the US economy in 2026? Above-trend GDP growth and disinflation (Goldilocks), Above-trend GDP growth and accelerating inflation (Boom), below-trend GDP growth and accelerating inflation (Stagflation), below-trend GDP growth and disinflation (Soft landing), Recession



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 8: 69% of advisors see more green shoots than red flags, up slightly from 65% last year

Do you expect to see more green shoots (recovery) or red flags (deterioration) in the overall economy in 2026?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

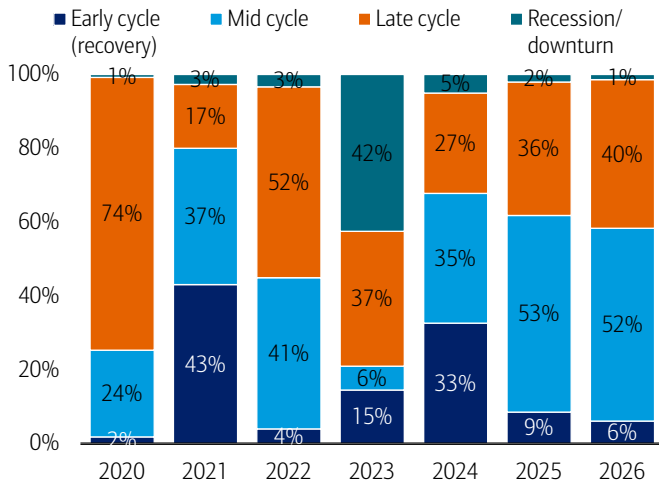
Advisors believe we are mid to late cycle

- **52% say mid cycle and 40% say late cycle**, with only 6%/1% believing we're early cycle or in a downturn. Meanwhile, our [US Regime Indicator \(report\)](#) has been bouncing between the early cycle and downturn phases for two years.



Exhibit 9: Advisors believe we're "Mid cycle", similar to last year

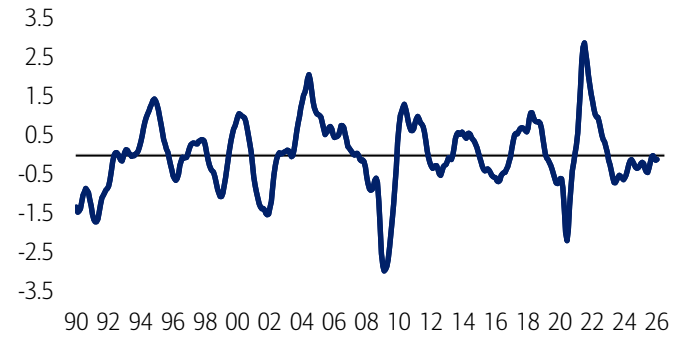
Where do you think we are in the business cycle within the US?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 10: Meanwhile, our US Regime Indicator has been oscillating between Early Cycle and Downturn for over two years

The US Regime indicator (Jan. 1990-January 2026)



Source: BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy, LSEG Data & Analytics, ICE Data Indices, LLC, Institute for Supply Management, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Federal Reserve.
Note: Phase 1 – Early Cycle; Phase 2 – Mid Cycle; Phase 3 – Late Cycle; Phase 4 – Recession
Disclaimer: The indicator identified as the US Regime Indicator above is intended to be an indicative metric only and may not be used for reference purposes or as a measure of performance for any financial instrument or contract, or otherwise be relied upon by third parties for any other purpose, without the written consent of BofA Global Research. This indicator was not created to act as a benchmark

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

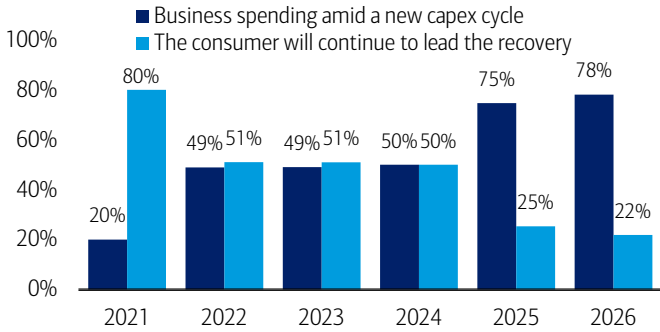
Record bullishness on capex vs. consumption

- **78% are bullish on business spending amid a capex cycle**, the most bullish reading for capex in our survey history, vs. 22% expect the consumer to lead, a record low in our survey history. We similarly are more bullish on capex over consumption in 2026 – see our [Year Ahead](#) report.
- **Capex is in an upcycle.** Capex grew by >20% YoY in 2Q & 3Q and is on track to post similar growth in 4Q. AI has been the primary driver of the capex cycle so far but spend could broaden out to other sectors from here given bi-partisan support for reshoring and manufacturing in the US, plus an incremental boost from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA). Tariff uncertainty likely paused projects, translating to pent-up activity in the pipeline. See [Earnings Tracker](#).
- **Capex indicators remain positive.** Our capex guidance ratio (#of above- vs. below-consensus capex guides) remains very strong at 2.0x over the last three months, well above the historical average of 1.4x. Moreover, the Business Roundtable CEO Survey suggests capex inflecting higher going forward.



Exhibit 11: 78% expect business spending to lead economic growth this year, the highest level in our survey history

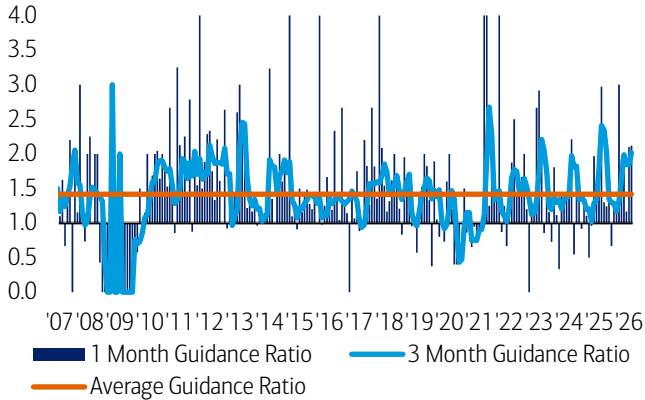
Which one of the following better describes how bullish you are on business vs. consumer spending?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 13: Our capex guidance ratio remains strong at 2.0x

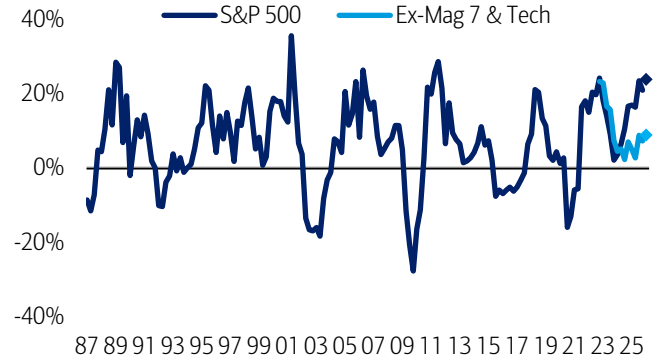
S&P 500 capex guidance ratio (# above- vs. below-consensus), 2007-2/23/26)



Source: FactSet, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 12: S&P 500 capex is tracking +24% YoY in 4Q (vs. +21% YoY in 3Q)

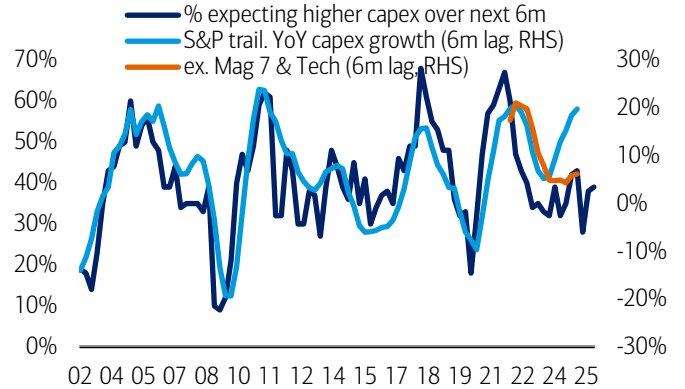
S&P 500 quarterly capex YoY (1987-4Q25E)



Source: BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy, FactSet
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 14: % of CEOs expecting higher capex over the next six months has continued to tick up (latest = 39%)

Business Roundtable CEO Survey: % expecting higher capex over the next 6 mos. vs. S&P 500 TTM YoY capex with a 6-mo lag (4Q02-4Q24)



Source: Haver Analytics, FactSet, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

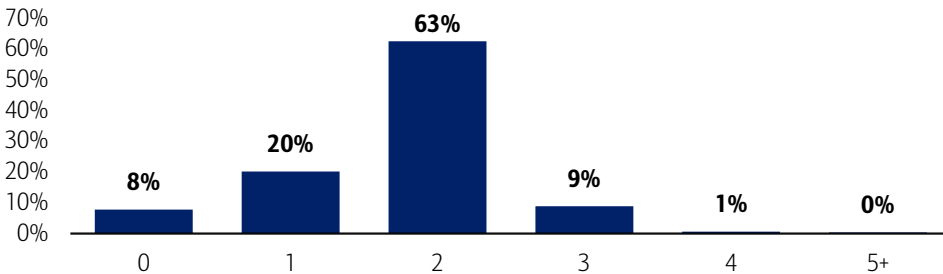
Merrill advisors on the Fed

Advisors expect two rate cuts this year

- On average, advisors expect two cuts in 2026, similar to market expectations when the survey was conducted and in-line with our economists' expectations. More advisors expect <2 cuts (28%) than >2 cuts (10%).

Exhibit 15: Advisors expect 2 rate cuts on average this year

What do you expect the Fed to do in 2026? (Market pricing when the survey was conducted = two cuts)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH



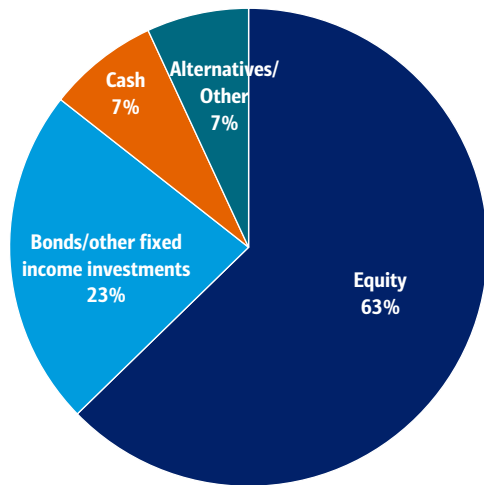
Merrill advisors on asset allocation

Equity allocations are the highest in 5 years

- Equity allocation rises to 63% (from 62% last year), the highest since 2021's 64% high. This is also consistent with what our Sell Side Indicator suggests, which has generally risen since 2023 and is closer to a "Sell" signal than a "Buy" signal - see [Sell Side Indicator report](#).

Exhibit 16: FAs on average have 63% allocated to equities, up slightly from 62% last year

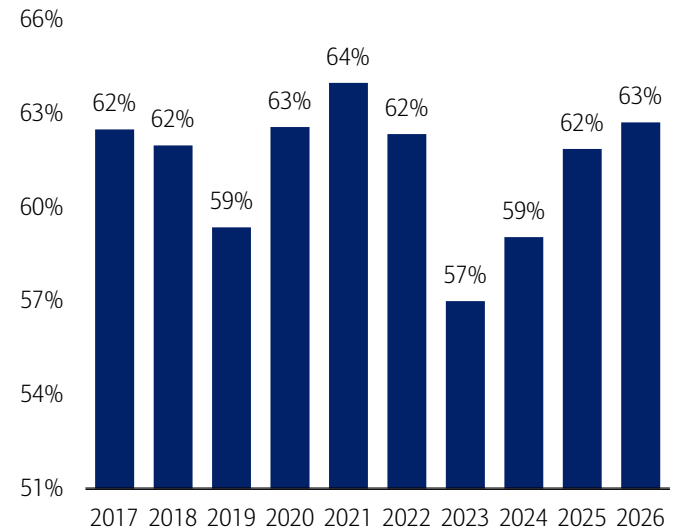
Asset allocation across advisors' book of business (average of survey respondents)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 17: Equity allocation now at the highest since 2021

% equity allocation (2017-2026 surveys)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 18: The Sell Side Indicator (avg. equity allocation of Wall St. strategists) was unchanged in February at 56.0%, above the 15yr average but not yet at an extreme

Sell Side Indicator, 8/1985-2/2026



Source: BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy Note: Buy and Sell signals are based on rolling 15-year +/- 1 standard deviation from the rolling 15-year mean. A reading above the red line indicates a Sell signal and a reading below the green line indicates a Buy signal
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

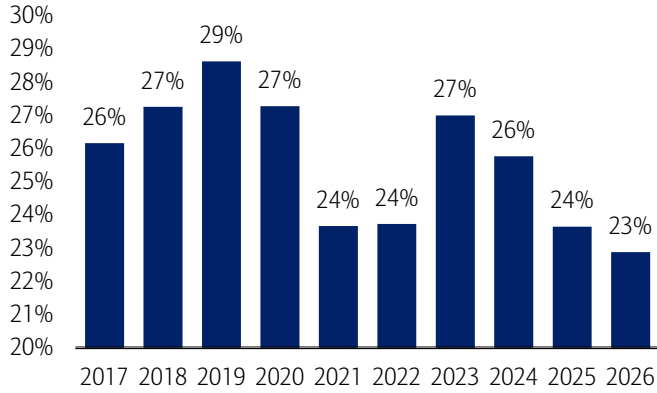
Bonds are the most unloved in our survey history

- Bond allocation falls to survey history lows. Advisors' bond allocation ticked down to 23% (vs 24% last year), the lowest levels in our survey history since 2017. Similarly, Sell Side strategists' average recommended bond allocation has also been declining, since mid-2023.



Exhibit 19: Bond allocations are the lowest in our survey history

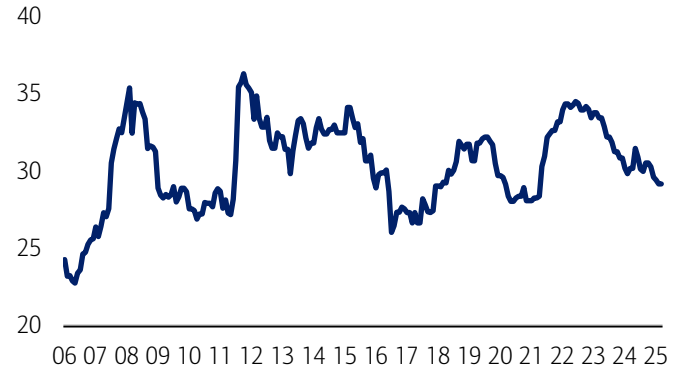
Average bond allocation % (2017-2026 surveys)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 20: Sell Side's bond allocation has also been declining (since mid-2023)

Avg. recommended allocation to bonds by Wall St. strategists (2006-2/2026)



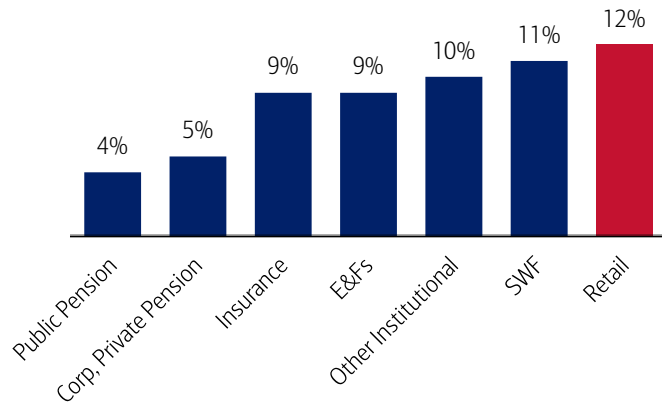
Source: BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Advisors are adding alternatives

- **Exposure to alternatives rises 1ppt to 7%**, the highest level in our data history since 2017.
- **23% are adding exposure to alternatives**, similar to 24% last year and up from 18% in 2023 and 2024. Interestingly, the 23% is similar to 23% and 24% for equities and bonds, indicating rising interest in alternative investments.

Exhibit 21: Global alternatives AUM CAGR in 2022-2032 by investor

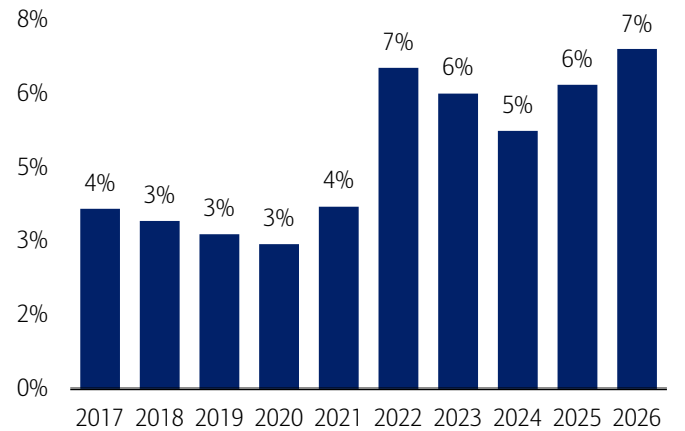
Retail is expected to be the fastest-growing segment



Source: BofA Global Research, Bain (as published Feb. 2025 in "European Asset Management: Feedback on Private Credit and Private Wealth meetings")
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 22: Alternative allocations are the highest in our survey history

Average bond allocation % (2017-2026 surveys)

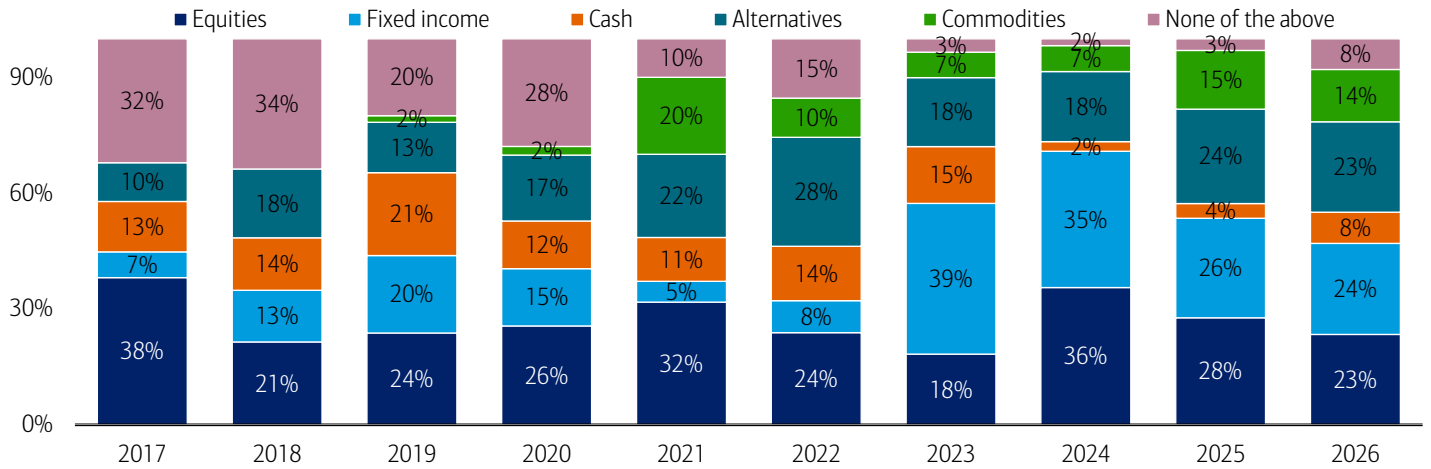


Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH



Exhibit 23: % of advisors adding equities and bonds falls, while % adding alternatives rises

How are you currently changing your asset allocation? Moving more into...



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy

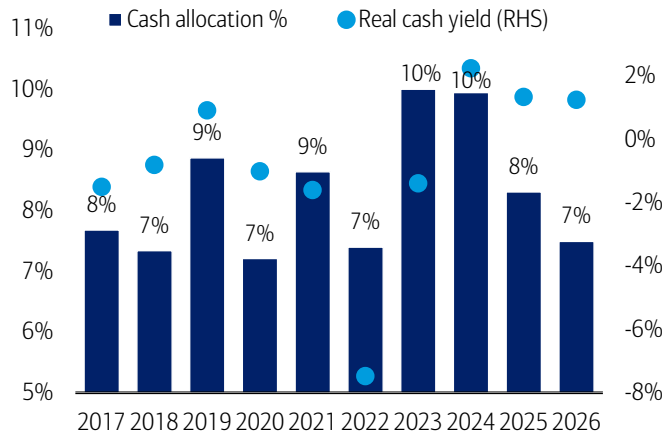
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Cash allocation falls to the lowest since 2022

- **Advisors reported cash allocations fell to 7% from 8%**, the lowest level since 2022 amid falling cash yields.
- **More advisors reported lower than higher cash balances YoY**, with 33% reporting lower vs. 29% reporting higher, and most (37%) reporting no change.

Exhibit 24: Client cash allocations declined with cash yields

Average cash allocation % (2017-2026 surveys) and real cash yield



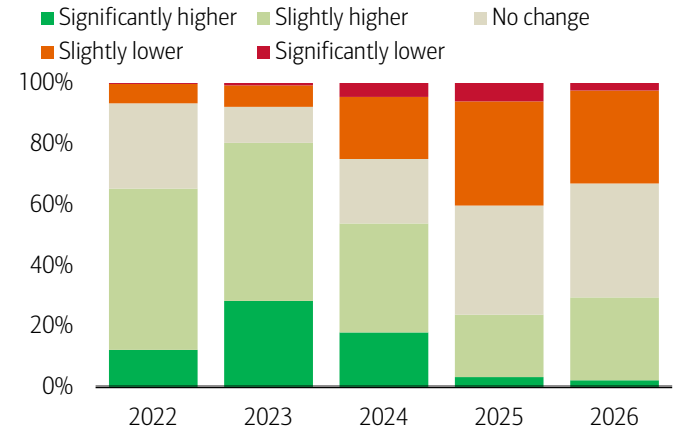
Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy

Note: Real cash yield as of month-end prior to month of survey publication

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 25: Advisors reported fewer clients are increasing cash balances vs. prior years

How would you describe your clients' cash balances (Merrill plus any other cash) compared to last year?



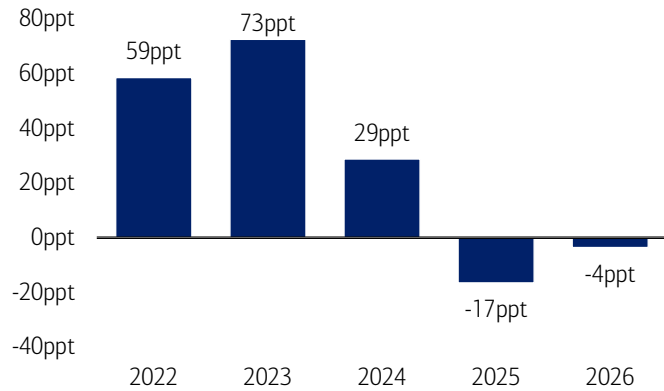
Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH



Exhibit 26: Advisors reported that client cash balances declined over the past two years

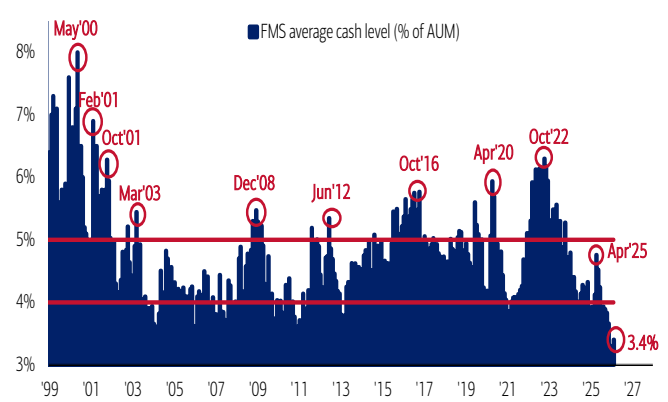
Net % of advisors reporting that cash balances are higher vs. last year



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 27: Global Fund Manager Survey: Reported cash level up to 3.4% from last month's record-low 3.2%

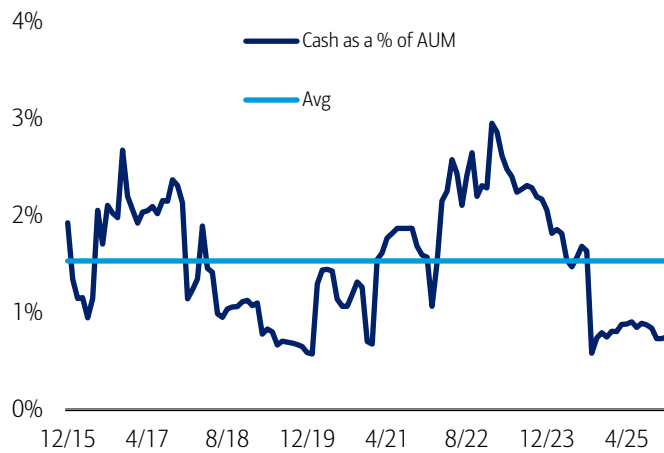
BofA FMS average cash level (% of AUM), as of 2/2026



Source: BofA Global Fund Manager Survey
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 28: US long only funds: actual cash levels are near a low in our data history

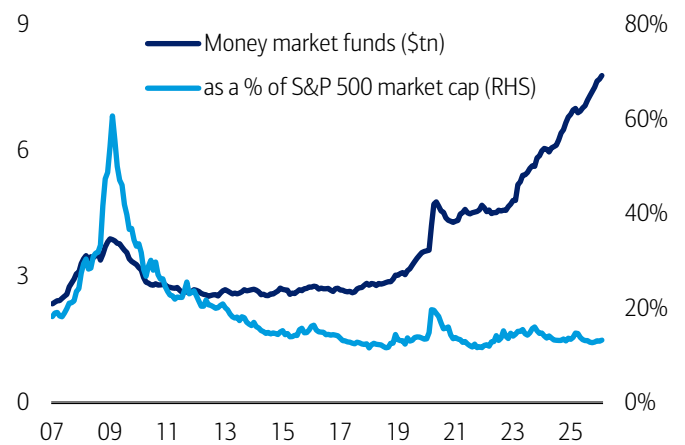
US long only funds' cash level as a % of their AUM, as of 12/2025



Source: BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy, FactSet Ownership
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 29: \$7.8tn in money market funds (13% of S&P 500 market cap)

Money-market fund assets (\$tn) and as a % of S&P 500 market cap, 2007-2/26



Source: Bloomberg, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

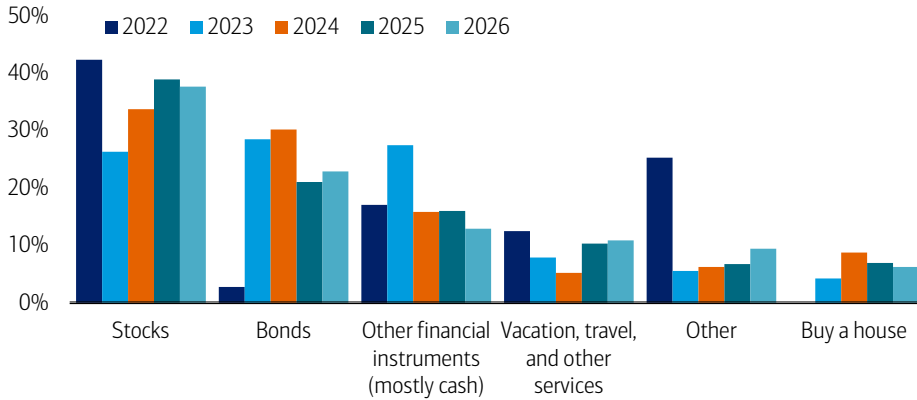
What are you doing with cash? Buying stocks

- **38% said they plan to buy stocks with excess cash**, similar to 39% last year. 23% said they plan to buy bonds, vs. 21% last year.
- **Travel over buying a house:** Only 6% looking to buy a house (the lowest since 2023), while 11% plan to use excess cash for vacation (the highest since 2023). "Other" (9%) responses commonly mentioned keeping in cash.



Exhibit 30: Advisors are looking to buy more stocks with excess cash this year

What are the clients looking to do with excess cash?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy

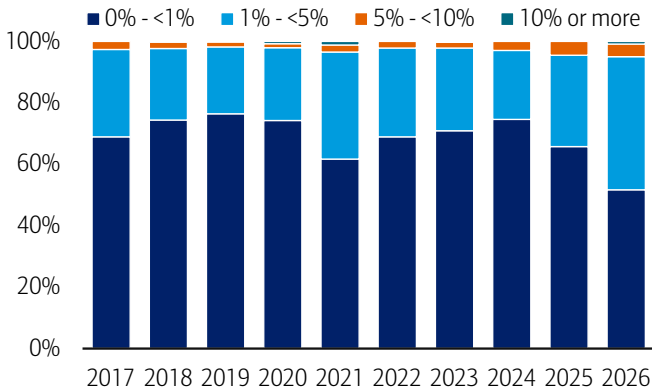
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Advisors adding more to gold amid the big rally in gold prices

- **48% have at least 1% exposure in gold**, the highest level in our data history since 2017.
- **5% of advisors have >5% exposure to gold**, also the highest level in our data history since 2017. 19% of respondents said they are increasing their gold exposure, the highest in our survey history. The 9% indicating they are decreasing gold exposure was also the highest in our survey history.

Exhibit 31: Nearly half of advisors have at least 1% exposure in gold

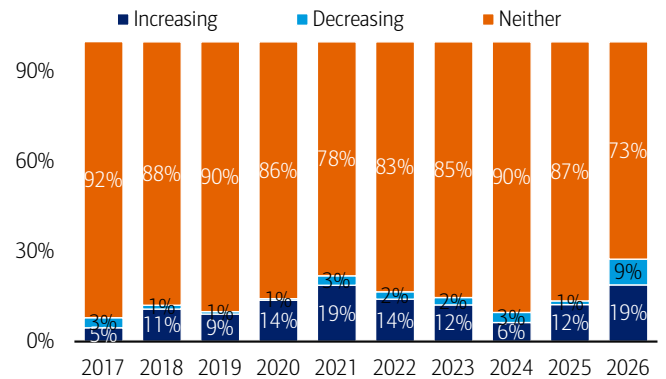
Asset allocated to gold among all book of business



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 32: Record 19% indicated they are adding gold exposure

Are you currently interested in adding exposure to gold?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Advisors on allocation within the market

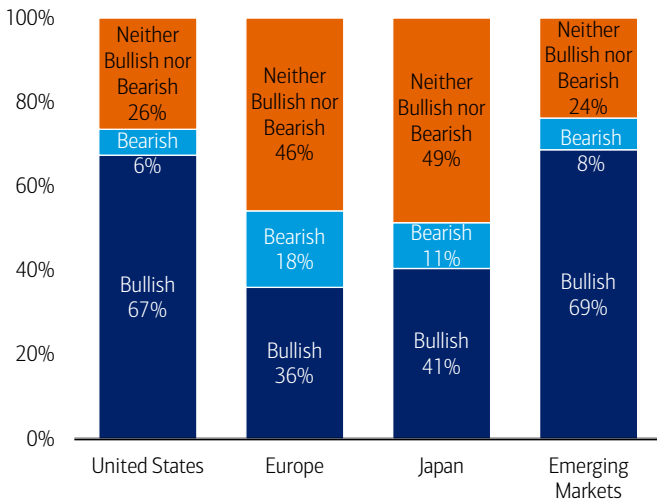
EM bullishness has caught up to US bullishness

- **Investors bullish on both EM and US.** Within global equities, the net % of advisors who are bullish vs. bearish on each global region suggests the bullishness on EM has increased vs. US bullishness has decreased, with both at a net 61%.
- **Advisors are most bullish on Europe since 2018.** A net 18% are bullish Europe, vs. 32% net bearish last year. Japan sentiment was similar to 2015 with a net 30% bullish.



Exhibit 33: Advisors are most bullish on EM vs. other regions

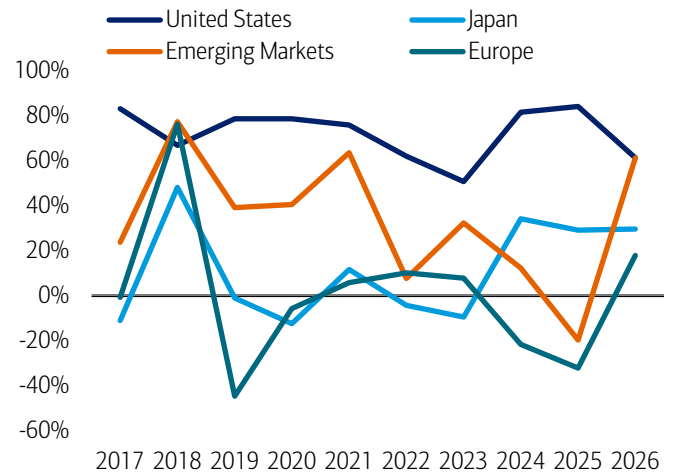
Within global equities, express your view (bullish, bearish, neither) across different regions



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 34: Net bullishness on EM (which increased) has caught up to net bullishness on US (which declined)

% of net bullish-bearish view towards equities in different regions



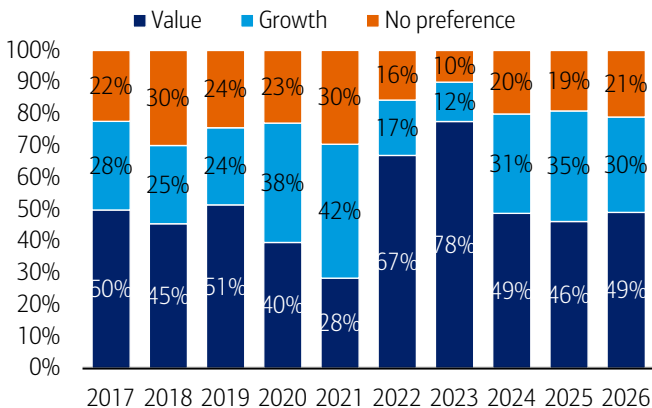
Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Advisors' Value bias is the highest since 2023

- **Advisors increasingly prefer Value over Growth.** 49% of advisors favor Value (up from 46% last year) while 30% favor growth (down from 35% last year). The net Value bias of 19% is the highest since 2023.
- **Advisors expect Value to outperform short and medium-term, but are split on long-term:** More advisors expect Value to outperform than Growth to outperform over both the next 1-3 months and 4-12 months. But an equal proportion of advisors expect Value and Growth to outperform over the next 12 months.

Exhibit 35: Advisors have increased their Value>Growth bias to the widest since 2023

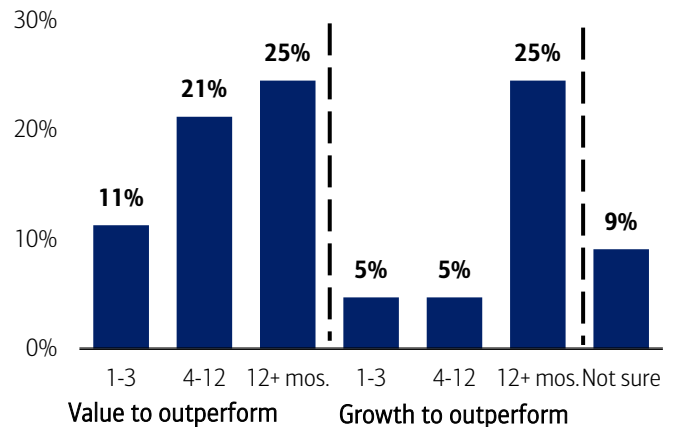
From a style perspective, do you currently prefer Value or Growth?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 36: Advisors expect value to outperform Growth in the short- and medium-term but are split on which outperforms over next 12mos

Which style do you expect to outperform over different time frames?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

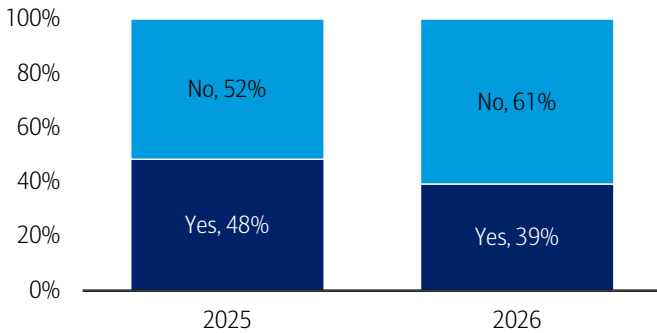


Advisors expect Big Tech to lag, but say AI is not in a bubble

- **Advisors expect mega cap Tech to underperform.** Only 39% of advisors expect mega cap Tech to outperform in '26. Last year, advisors were more evenly split on whether they expected mega cap Tech to lead or lag.
- **No bubble in AI yet:** Only 25% of advisors believe AI is in a bubble (a new question in our 2026 survey).

Exhibit 37: More advisors expect Tech to underperform than outperform in 2026

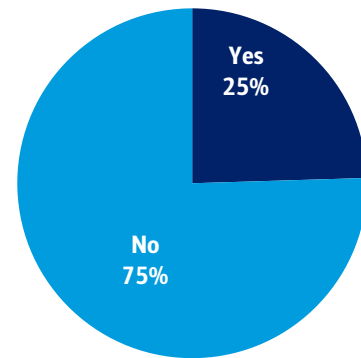
Do you expect mega-cap Tech stocks to continue to outperform the S&P 500 this year?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 38: Only 25% of advisors believe AI is a bubble

Do you believe AI is a bubble? (% of respondents)



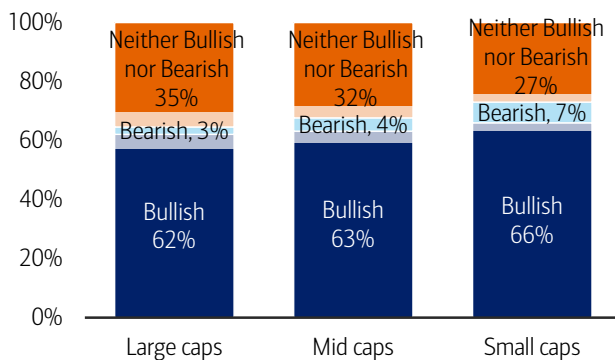
Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Small cap bullishness has increased

- **Net bullishness similar across the cap spectrum.** A net 60%/59%/59% of respondents were bullish on large/mid/small caps, vs. greater net bullishness up the cap spectrum a year ago (70%/61%/44%).
- **Highest conviction call: small caps outperform over the medium-term:** 26% of respondents indicated they expect small caps to outperform over the medium-term (4-12 months), the most-selected response when asked about small and large cap views over the short, medium and long-term. A higher proportion of respondents also expects small caps to outperform over the short-term and long-term than large caps to outperform over those periods.

Exhibit 39: Advisors are bullish on all three size segments

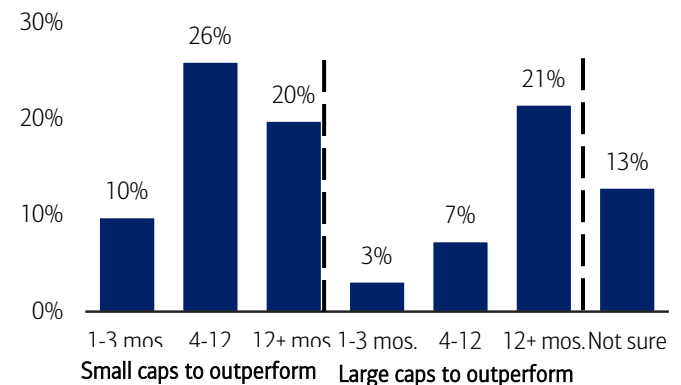
Express your view towards each size segment of the US equity market (Bullish / Neutral / Bearish)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 40: Highest conviction call: small caps outperform over the medium-term

Which one of the following best reflects your opinion?

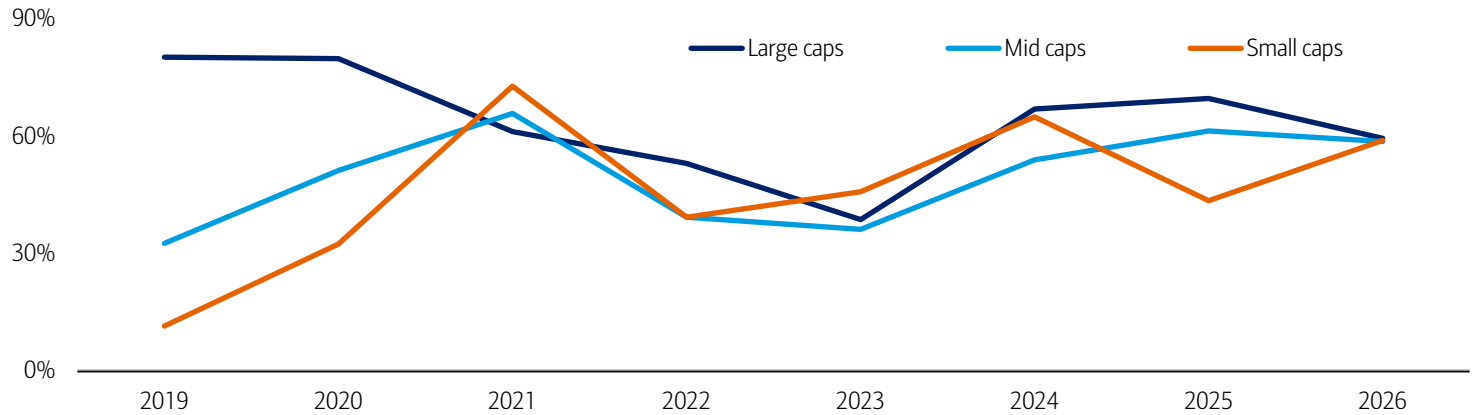


Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH



Exhibit 41: Advisors net bullishness is equal across the three size segments after ticking up for small caps and ticking down for large caps

Percentage of net bullish-bearish views on large-caps, mid-caps, and small-caps (2019-2026 surveys)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy

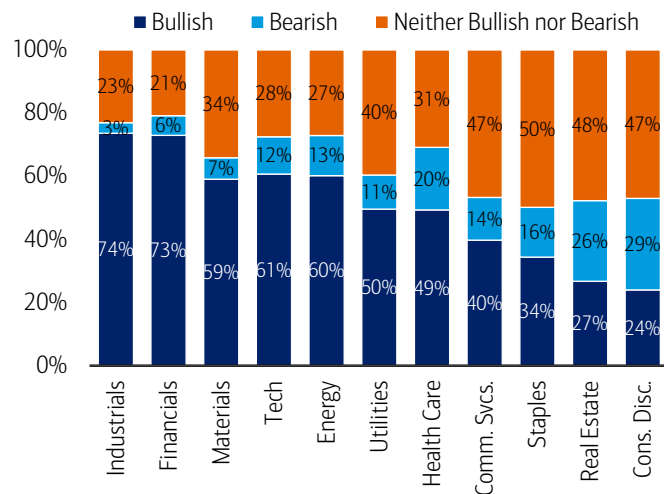
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Advisors are most bullish on Industrials, most bearish on Cons. Discretionary

- **Advisors are most bullish on Industrials & Financials.** A net 70% of advisors are bullish on Industrials and a net 67% are bullish on Financials (though bullishness increased on Industrials vs. deteriorated on Financials relative to a year ago). Meanwhile, Consumer Discretionary is the one sector where the net percentage of advisors was bearish (-5%).
- **Materials and Energy saw the biggest increase in bullishness.** Materials and Energy, followed by Health Care, saw the biggest YoY increases in the net bullishness from advisors, while Consumer Discretionary and Communication Services saw the biggest drops.

Exhibit 42: Respondents are most bullish on Industrials and Financials, most bearish on Consumer Discretionary

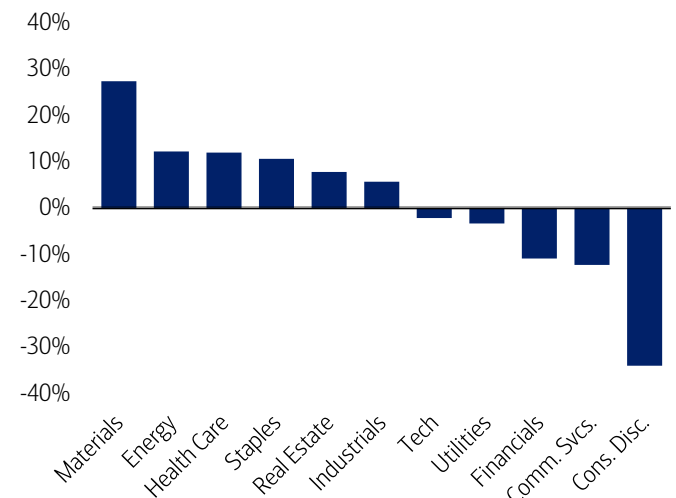
Express your view towards each sector of the US equity market (Bullish / Bearish / Neither Bullish or Bearish)



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 43: Materials and Energy saw the biggest YoY increases in bullishness, while Cons. Disc. and Comm. Services saw the biggest drop

YoY changes in net bullishness by sectors



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

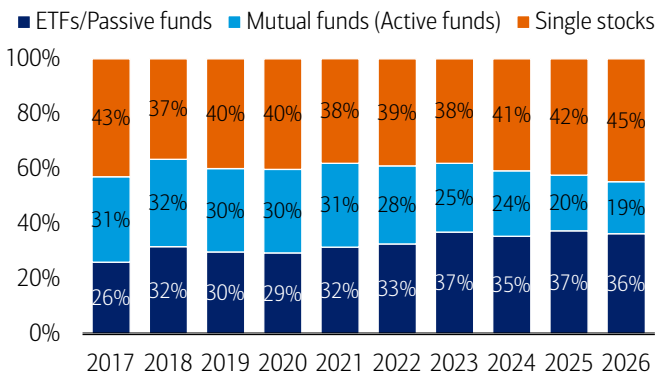


Active fund exposure at a record low

- **Single stock exposure up to record highs, passive exposure just off records.** Advisors increased their single stock exposure to 45% (+3ppt YoY), the highest level in our survey history since 2017. ETF/passive exposure of 36% was just 1ppt off last year's record highs in our survey history.
- **Active exposure down to a record low.** Advisors reduced their active fund exposure by 1ppt to 19%, the lowest level in our survey history since 2017.
- **Moving more into passive and single stocks from here.** When asked how they are changing their equity allocation, the largest share of advisors (41%) indicated they are moving more into ETFs/passive, followed by moving more into single stocks (33%). Only 8% are moving more into active funds.

Exhibit 44: Advisors increased single stock exposure by 3ppt YoY, while reducing passive and active fund exposure by 1ppt each

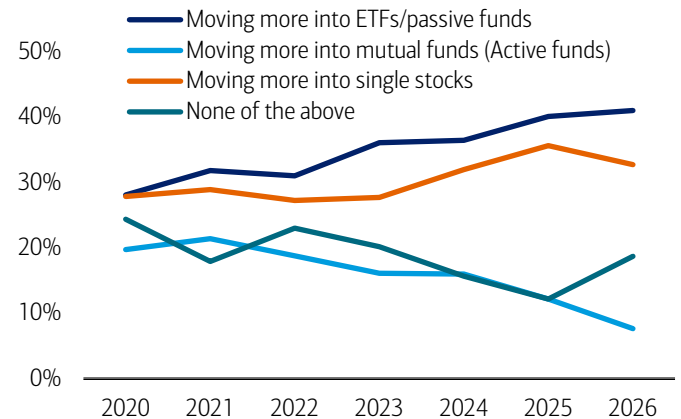
Average allocation within equities according to survey respondents: single stocks, active mutual funds, and passive funds/ETFs



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 45: Advisors continue to move out of active and into passive

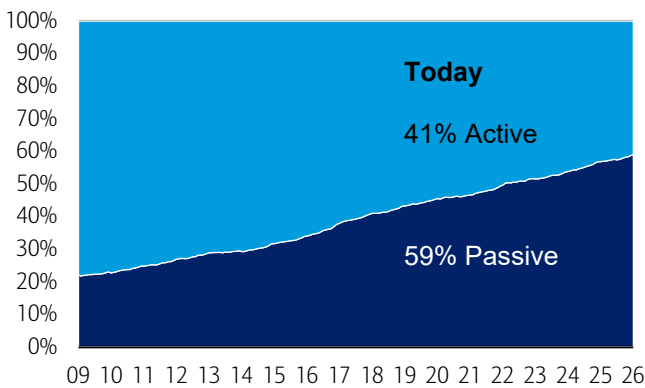
How are you currently changing your equity allocation?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 46: Passive is >50% of US AUM

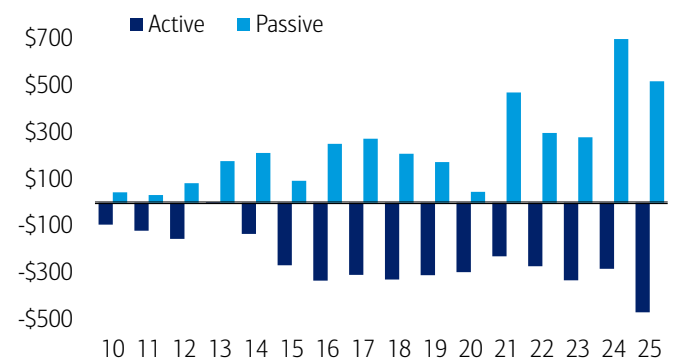
US AUM allocation active vs. passive (as of 1/2026)



Source: BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy, Strategic Insights SimFund
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 47: 2025 was a record year for US active outflows and a near-record year for passive inflows

US-mandated equity flows (2010-2025) (\$bn)



Source: BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy, EPFR
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Most popular stock holdings: AAPL, NVDA and MSFT

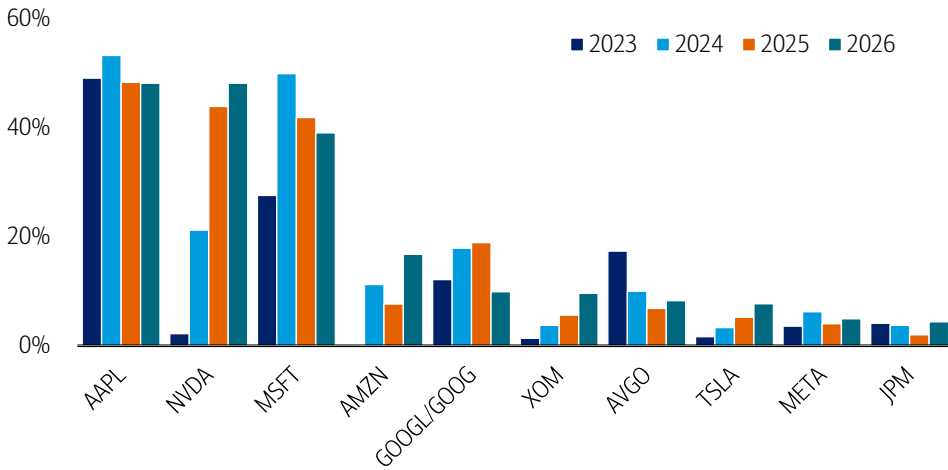
- We asked advisors for their top three individual stock holdings and present the top 10 responses below.
- **Apple (AAPL)** continued to top the list, cited as a top 3 holding by 48% of respondents (unchanged from last year), tied with **Nvidia (NVDA)** which rose to



48% from 44% last year. Microsoft (**MSFT**) popularity declined to 39% from 42% last year, while this year's #4 stock, **Amazon (AMZN)**, was cited by 17% vs. just 8% a year ago.

Exhibit 48: AAPL, NVDA and MSFT are cited as the biggest holdings

% of respondents citing stock as a top 3 holding



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy

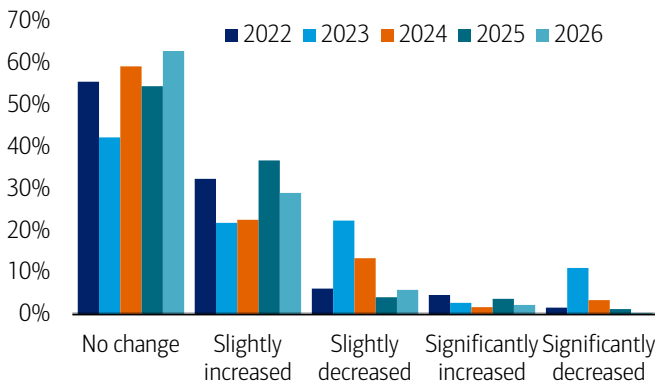
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Trading activity little-changed (but more increased than decreased trading)

- **63% of respondents indicated no change in their clients' trading activity YoY**, suggesting more inactivity than in prior years of our survey since we began asking this question in 2022. But of those who changed, 31% indicated an increase in activity vs. 6% a decrease in activity.
- Similarly, FINRA data shows that retail volume has been rising over the past year.
- Overall, higher retail activity plus strong 2025 returns for the average stock plus increased turnover suggests potential for elevated short-term capital gains taxes for individual investors in 2025.

Exhibit 49: Private clients' trading activity remained largely unchanged YoY, though more increased than decreased activity

How would you characterize your clients' trading activity over the last year?

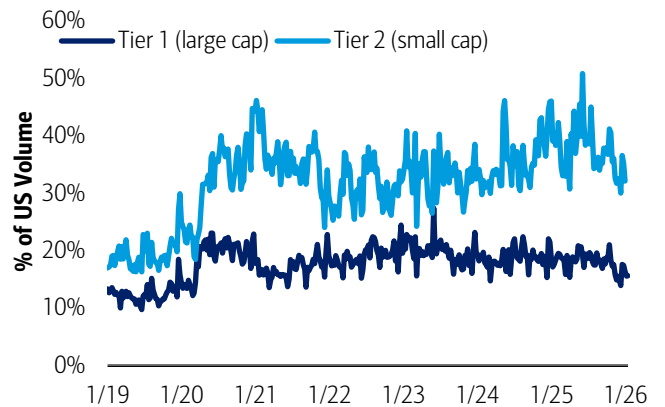


Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 50: Retail volume has increased in recent years (particularly for small caps)

Retail trading volume as % of total (2019-1/19/26)



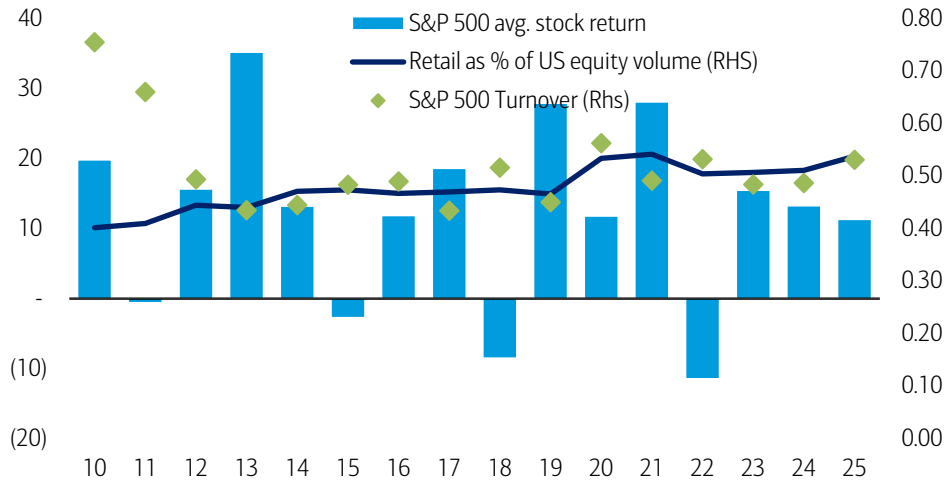
Source: FINRA Transparency and NYSE TAQ

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH



Exhibit 51: Higher retail activity + strong returns + higher turnover = potential for elevated capital gains taxes for individual investors

Return of average S&P 500 stock vs. Retail as a % of US volumes (Bloomberg intelligence estimates vs. S&P 500 annual turnover (% of market cap), 2010-2025



Source: Bloomberg, FactSet, BofA Us Equity & US Quant Strategy

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

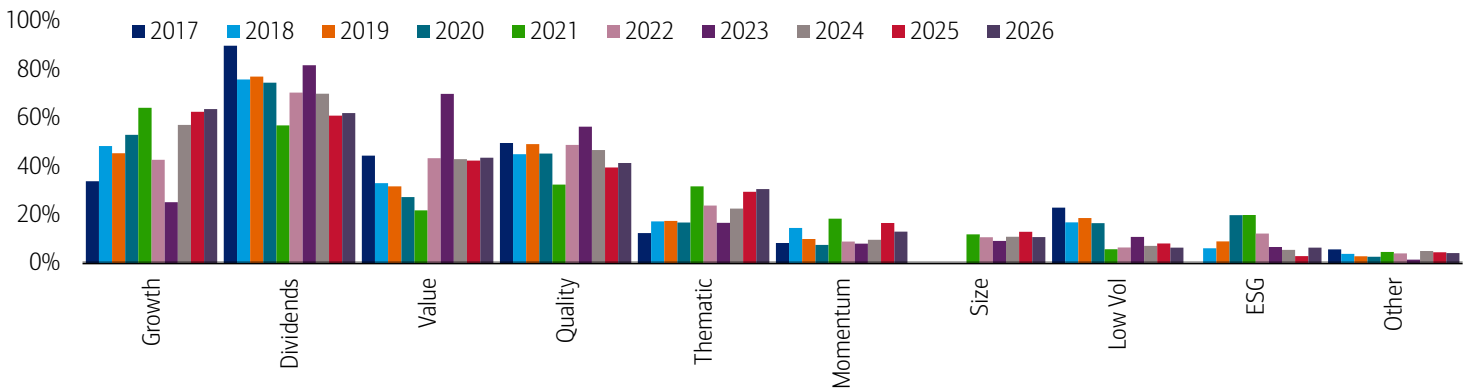
Advisors on other strategies within the market

Growth remains the #1 strategy, topping dividends for the second year

- 64% of advisors indicated that clients are most interested in Growth strategies, a record high for Growth in our survey history since 2017, topping Dividend Strategies (62%) for the second year in a row.
- Interest in Value strategies also rose (to 44% from 42%, the highest since 2023), while interest in Momentum strategists dropped to 13% from 17%.
- Advisors’ most preferred vehicle for investing in equity yield remains dividend growth and dividend yield funds/ETFs.

Exhibit 52: Advisors are most interested in growth strategies, followed by dividends

The strategies that were used most frequently/seen most interests from the clients



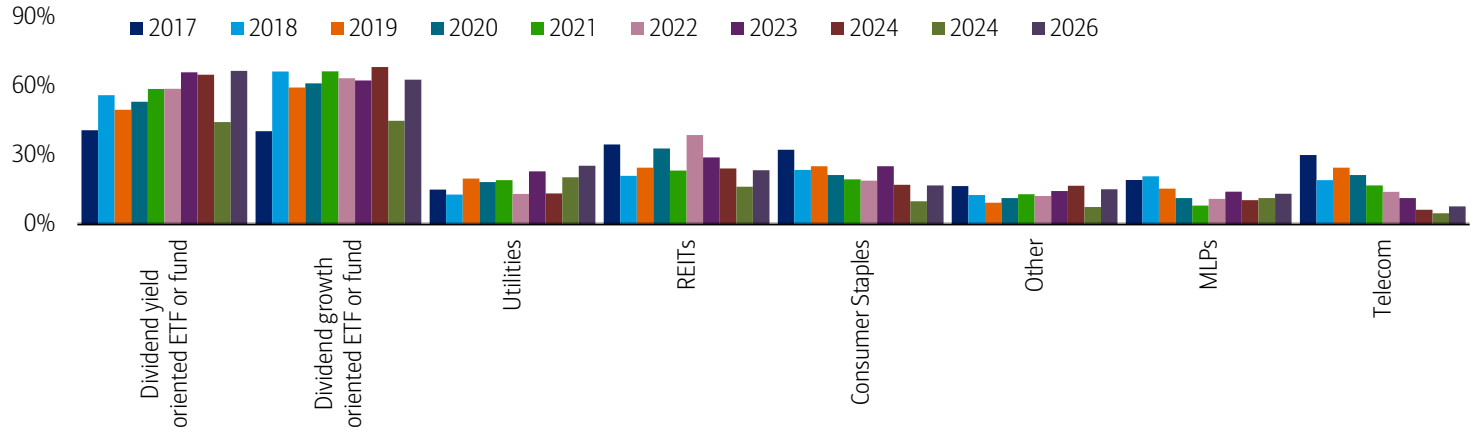
Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH



Exhibit 53: Advisors prefer dividend yield or dividend growth funds/ETFs for investing in equity yield

What are your preferred avenues for investing in equity yield? You may select up to 3.



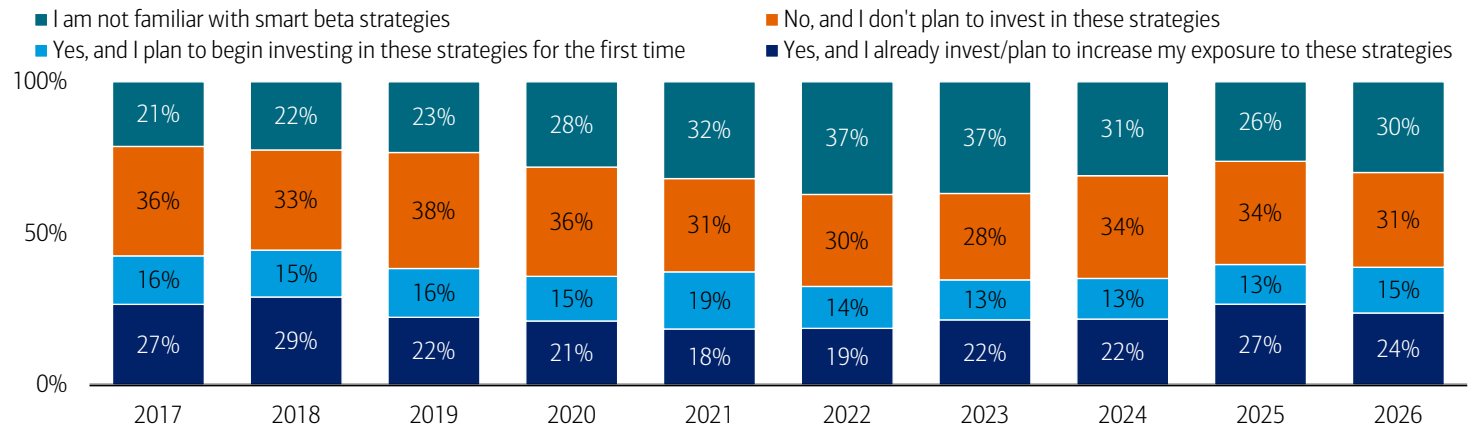
Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy

“Smart beta” interest just off last year’s highs

- 39% of respondents indicated they are either investing in or plan to invest in smart beta strategies, -1ppt from last year’s record highs in our survey history.

Exhibit 54: Smart beta interest saw rise to the highest level since 2018

Express your interest in investing smart beta strategies



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & Quant Strategy

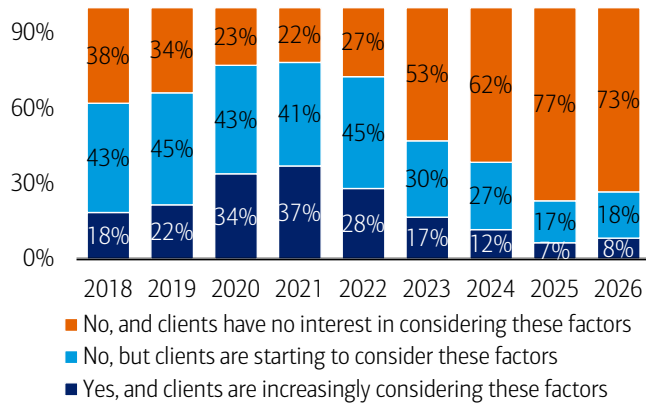
ESG interest up just slightly from last year’s lows

- **73% said no interest in ESG factors.** Interest in ESG improve slightly but remains low, with 73% of advisors saying their clients have no interest in ESG factors, down just slightly from last year’s 77% record since we began asking this in 2018. Only 8% cited ESG factors as a consideration in their clients’ investment processes (vs 7% a year ago), well below the 37% peak in 2021.
- Despite the limit interest, ESG ETFs saw +23% YoY increase in AUM in 2025.



Exhibit 55: ESG interest up just slightly from last year's lows

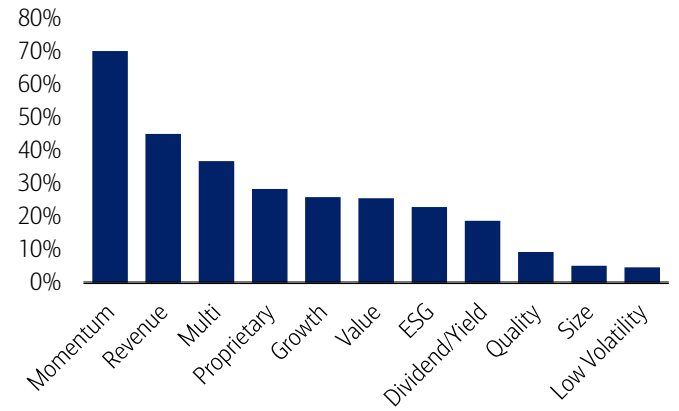
Are Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) factors a consideration in your current clients' investment process?



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 56: ESG saw a 23% increase in AUM

US smart beta AUM YoY in 2025



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH



Appendix

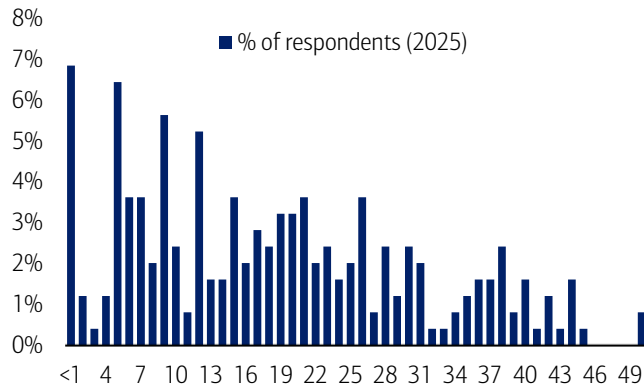
Methodology

With the help of the Wealth Management Marketing Research team, we surveyed Merrill Financial Advisors (FAs) from around the country. Our survey was open from January 28 – February 23, 2026, and received responses from 363 advisors with average industry tenure of 19 years, and with 75% of these advisors managing household assets in excess of \$100mn. We asked 31 questions intended to better understand advisors' views and preferences across asset classes, sectors and style, and the summary results are published in this report. The full list of questions can be found on the next page.

Distribution of respondents: Tenure and AUM

Exhibit 57: Industry tenure of respondents (# of years)

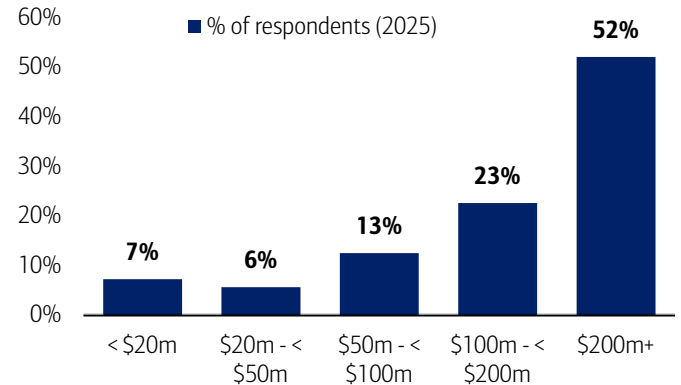
% of respondents by industry tenure



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

Exhibit 58: Assets managed (% of respondents)

% of respondents by AUM size



Source: Wealth Management Marketing Research, BofA US Equity & US Quant Strategy
BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

2026 Survey Questions

1. **How bullish (positive) or bearish (negative) are you about the equity market over the next... (Select a number from 1-10, with 10=Extremely Bullish, 1=Extremely Bearish).**
 - a. 3 months
 - b. 12 months

2. **Which of the following statements is most accurate?**
 - a. You are more bullish about the equity market than your average client
 - b. Your average client is more bullish about the equity market than you
 - c. You and your average client are equally bullish about the equity market
 - d. You and your average client are equally bearish about the equity market

3. **How would you describe your clients' cash balances (Merrill plus any other cash) compared to last year?**
 - a. Significantly higher
 - b. Slightly higher



- c. No change
- d. Slightly lower
- e. Significantly lower

4. **What are the clients looking to do with excess cash?**

- a. Invest in stocks
- b. Invest in bonds
- c. Invest in other financial instruments (please specify)
- d. Buy a house
- e. Spend on vacation, travel, and other services
- f. Other (please specify)

5. **How would you characterize your clients' trading activity over the last year?**

- a. Significantly increased
- b. Slightly increased
- c. No change
- d. Slightly decreased
- e. Significantly decreased

6. **Please allocate 100% across the categories below to reflect the current asset allocation across your book of business. You may use any number between 0 and 100 for each category as long as the sum equals 100%.**

- a. Equity
- b. Bonds or other fixed income investments
- c. Cash
- d. Commodities
- e. Currency
- f. Cryptocurrency
- g. Private equity
- h. SPAC (Special Purpose Acquisition Company)
- i. Real Estate
- j. Other alternative investments

7. **Please allocate 100% across the categories below to reflect the current EQUITY allocation across your book of business. You may use any**



number between 0 and 100 for each category as long as the sum of the three categories equals 100%.

- a. ETFs/Passive funds
- b. Mutual funds (Active funds)
- c. Single stocks

8. How are you currently changing your asset allocation? Select all that apply.

- a. Moving more into equities
- b. Moving more into bonds or other fixed income investments
- c. Moving more into cash
- d. Moving more into commodities
- e. Moving more into alternatives
- f. None of the above

9. How are you currently changing your equity allocation? Select all that apply.

- a. Moving more into ETFs/passive funds
- b. Moving more into mutual funds (active funds)
- c. Moving more into single stocks
- d. None of the above

10. When do you expect the US equity market will peak (signaling the end of this bull market)?

- a. It already peaked
- b. 1H 2026
- c. 2H 2026
- d. Beyond 2026

11. What do you expect the Fed to do in 2026?

- a. Hike
- b. No cuts (hold)
- c. 1 cut (-25bps)
- d. 2 cuts (-50bps)
- e. 3 cuts (-75bps)
- f. 4 cuts (-100bps)
- g. More than 4 cuts



12. What is your view on the US economy in 2026?

- a. Recession
- b. Below-trend GDP growth + disinflation
- c. Below-trend GDP growth + accelerating inflation
- d. Above-trend GDP growth + disinflation
- e. Above-trend GDP growth + accelerating inflation

13. From a style perspective, do you currently prefer Value or Growth?

- a. Value
- b. Growth
- c. No preference

14. Which one of the following best reflects your opinion?

- a. I expect Value to outperform Growth in the short term (1-3 months)
- b. I expect Value to outperform Growth in the medium term (4-12 months)
- c. I expect Value to outperform Growth in the long-term (12+ months)
- d. I expect Growth to outperform Value in the short term (1-3 months)
- e. I expect Growth to outperform Value in the medium term (4-12 months)
- f. I expect Growth to outperform Value in the long term (12+ months)
- g. Not sure

15. Do you expect mega-cap Tech stocks to continue to outperform the S&P 500 in 2026?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. Do you believe AI is a bubble?

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. For each sector below, please indicate whether you are bullish (positive) or bearish (negative) about each one, or whether you are neither bullish nor bearish. Please select one option per row.

- a. Consumer Discretionary
- b. Consumer Staples



- c. Energy
- d. Financials
- e. Health Care
- f. Industrials
- g. Information Technology
- h. Materials
- i. Real Estate
- j. Communication Services
- k. Utilities

18. **For each size segment of the US equity market, please indicate whether you are bullish (positive) or bearish (negative) about each one, or whether you are neither bullish nor bearish.**

- a. Large caps
- b. Mid caps
- c. Small caps

19. **Which one of the following best reflects your opinion?**

- a. I expect small caps to outperform large caps in the short term (1-3 months)
- b. I expect small caps to outperform large caps in the medium term (4-12 months)
- c. I expect small caps to outperform large caps in the long term (12+ months)
- d. I expect large caps to outperform small caps in the medium term (1-3 months)
- e. I expect large caps to outperform small caps in the medium term (4-12 months)
- f. I expect large caps to outperform small caps in the long term (12+ months)
- g. Not sure

20. **Which of the following best represents your allocation to gold across your book of business?**

- a. 0% - <1%
- b. 1% - 5%
- c. 5% - 10%
- d. 10% or more

21. **Are you currently....?**

- a. Increasing gold/gold equity exposure
- b. Decreasing gold/gold equity exposure



c. Neither increasing nor decreasing gold/gold equity exposure

22. Which of the following do you view as the biggest risks to US equities? You may select up to 3.

- a. Central Bank policy mistake
- b. Economic recession
- c. China hard landing
- d. ETF/Quant-driven liquidity flash crash
- e. Global trade/tariffs
- f. Inflation
- g. Deflation
- h. Bubbles within equities
- i. Rising interest rates
- j. Pandemics
- k. Geopolitics
- l. Speculative retail activity
- m. Government debt
- n. Unfunded liabilities (e.g. Social Security, Medicare/Medicaid)
- o. Credit shock
- p. Surge or collapse in commodity prices
- q. Other (please specify)

23. Which one of the following better describes how bullish you are on business vs. consumer spending?

- a. Business spending amid a capex cycle
- b. The consumer will lead

24. Within global equities, please indicate whether you are bullish (positive) or bearish (negative) about each of the following, or whether you are neither bullish nor bearish. Please select one option per row.

- a. United States
- b. Europe
- c. Japan
- d. Emerging Markets

25. Where do you think we are in the business cycle within the US?

- a. Early cycle/recovery



- b. Mid cycle
 - c. Late cycle
 - d. Recession/downturn
26. **Do you expect to see more green shoots (recovery) or red flags (deterioration) in the overall economy in 2026?**
- a. More green shoots
 - b. More red flags
27. **Are you interested in smart beta strategies?**
- a. Yes, and I already invest/plan to increase my exposure to these strategies
 - b. Yes, and I plan to begin investing in these strategies for the first time
 - c. No, and I don't plan to invest in these strategies
 - d. I am not familiar with smart beta strategies
28. **Are Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) factors a consideration in your average client's investment process?**
- a. Yes, and clients are increasingly considering these factors
 - b. No, but clients are starting to consider these factors
 - c. No, and clients have no interest in considering these factors
29. **Which of the following strategies have you used most frequently/seen the most interest from clients? You may select up to 3.**
- a. Dividend strategies
 - b. Value
 - c. Growth
 - d. Low Vol
 - e. Size
 - f. Quality
 - g. Momentum
 - h. Thematic
 - i. Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) strategies
 - j. Other (please specify)
30. **What are your preferred avenues for investing in equity yield? You may select up to 3.**
- a. Telecom



- b. Utilities
 - c. REITs
 - d. MLPs
 - e. Consumer Staples
 - f. Dividend yield oriented ETF or fund
 - g. Dividend growth oriented ETF or fund
 - h. Other (please specify)
31. **What are your top three individual stock holdings?**



Disclosures

Important Disclosures

FUNDAMENTAL EQUITY OPINION KEY: Opinions include a Volatility Risk Rating, an Investment Rating and an Income Rating. VOLATILITY RISK RATINGS, indicators of potential price fluctuation, are: A - Low, B - Medium and C - High. INVESTMENT RATINGS reflect the analyst's assessment of both a stock's absolute total return potential as well as its attractiveness for investment relative to other stocks within its Coverage Cluster (defined below). Our investment ratings are: 1 - Buy stocks are expected to have a total return of at least 10% and are the most attractive stocks in the coverage cluster; 2 - Neutral stocks are expected to remain flat or increase in value and are less attractive than Buy rated stocks and 3 - Underperform stocks are the least attractive stocks in a coverage cluster. An investment rating of 6 (No Rating) indicates that a stock is no longer trading on the basis of fundamentals. Analysts assign investment ratings considering, among other things, the 0-12 month total return expectation for a stock and the firm's guidelines for ratings dispersions (shown in the table below). The current price objective for a stock should be referenced to better understand the total return expectation at any given time. The price objective reflects the analyst's view of the potential price appreciation (depreciation).

Investment rating	Total return expectation (within 12-month period of date of initial rating)	Ratings dispersion guidelines for coverage cluster ^{R1}
Buy	≥ 10%	≤ 70%
Neutral	≥ 0%	≤ 30%
Underperform	N/A	≥ 20%

^{R1}Ratings dispersions may vary from time to time where BofA Global Research believes it better reflects the investment prospects of stocks in a Coverage Cluster.

INCOME RATINGS, indicators of potential cash dividends, are: 7 - same/higher (dividend considered to be secure), 8 - same/lower (dividend not considered to be secure) and 9 - pays no cash dividend. *Coverage Cluster* is comprised of stocks covered by a single analyst or two or more analysts sharing a common industry, sector, region or other classification(s). A stock's coverage cluster is included in the most recent BofA Global Research report referencing the stock.

Due to the nature of strategic analysis, the issuers or securities recommended or discussed in this report are not continuously followed. Accordingly, investors must regard this report as providing stand-alone analysis and should not expect continuing analysis or additional reports relating to such issuers and/or securities.

Due to the nature of quantitative analysis, the issuers or securities recommended or discussed in this report are not continuously followed. Accordingly, investors must regard this report as providing stand-alone analysis and should not expect continuing analysis or additional reports relating to such issuers and/or securities.

BofA Global Research personnel (including the analyst(s) responsible for this report) receive compensation based upon, among other factors, the overall profitability of Bank of America Corporation, including profits derived from investment banking. The analyst(s) responsible for this report may also receive compensation based upon, among other factors, the overall profitability of the Bank's sales and trading businesses relating to the class of securities or financial instruments for which such analyst is responsible.

Other Important Disclosures

Prices are indicative and for information purposes only. Except as otherwise stated in the report, for any recommendation in relation to an equity security, the price referenced is the publicly traded price of the security as of close of business on the day prior to the date of the report or, if the report is published during intraday trading, the price referenced is indicative of the traded price as of the date and time of the report and in relation to a debt security (including equity preferred and CDS), prices are indicative as of the date and time of the report and are from various sources including BofA Securities trading desks.

The date and time of completion of the production of any recommendation in this report shall be the date and time of dissemination of this report as recorded in the report timestamp.

This report may refer to fixed income securities or other financial instruments that may not be offered or sold in one or more states or jurisdictions, or to certain categories of investors, including retail investors. Readers of this report are advised that any discussion, recommendation or other mention of such instruments is not a solicitation or offer to transact in such instruments. Investors should contact their BofA Securities representative or Merrill Global Wealth Management financial advisor for information relating to such instruments.

Recipients who are not institutional investors or market professionals should seek the advice of their independent financial advisor before considering information in this report in connection with any investment decision, or for a necessary explanation of its contents.

Officers of BofAS or one or more of its affiliates (other than research analysts) may have a financial interest in securities of the issuer(s) or in related investments.

Refer to [BofA Global Research policies relating to conflicts of interest](#).

"BofA Securities" includes BofA Securities, Inc. ("BofAS") and its affiliates. Investors should contact their BofA Securities representative or Merrill Global Wealth Management financial advisor if they have questions concerning this report or concerning the appropriateness of any investment idea described herein for such investor. "BofA Securities" is a global brand for BofA Global Research.

Information relating to Non-US affiliates of BofA Securities and Distribution of Affiliate Research Reports:

BofAS and/or Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated ("MLPF&S") may in the future distribute, information of the following non-US affiliates in the US (short name: legal name, regulator): Merrill Lynch (South Africa): Merrill Lynch South Africa (Pty) Ltd., regulated by the Financial Sector Conduct Authority; MLI (UK): Merrill Lynch International, regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA); BofASE (France): BofA Securities Europe SA is authorized by the Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et de Résolution (ACPR) and regulated by the ACPR and the Autorité des Marchés Financiers (AMF). BofA Securities Europe SA ("BofASE") with registered address at 51, rue La Boétie, 75008 Paris is registered under no 842 602 690 RCS Paris. In accordance with the provisions of French Code Monétaire et Financier (Monetary and Financial Code), BofASE is an établissement de crédit et d'investissement (credit and investment institution) that is authorised and supervised by the European Central Bank and the Autorité de Contrôle Prudentiel et de Résolution (ACPR) and regulated by the ACPR and the Autorité des Marchés Financiers. BofASE's share capital can be found at www.bofam.com/BofASEdisclaimer; BofA Europe (Milan): Bank of America Europe Designated Activity Company, Milan Branch, regulated by the Bank of Italy, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Central Bank of Ireland (CBI); BofA Europe (Frankfurt): Bank of America Europe Designated Activity Company, Frankfurt Branch regulated by BaFin, the ECB and the CBI; BofA Europe (Zurich): Bank of America Europe Designated Activity Company, Zurich Branch, regulated by the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA, the ECB and CBI; BofA Europe (Madrid): Bank of America Europe Designated Activity Company, Sucursal en España, regulated by the Bank of Spain, the ECB and the CBI; Merrill Lynch (Australia): Merrill Lynch Equities (Australia) Limited, regulated by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission; Merrill Lynch (Hong Kong): Merrill Lynch (Asia Pacific) Limited, regulated by the Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission (HKSF); Merrill Lynch (Singapore): Merrill Lynch (Singapore) Pte Ltd, regulated by the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS); Merrill Lynch (Canada): Merrill Lynch Canada Inc, regulated by the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization; Merrill Lynch (Mexico): Merrill Lynch Mexico, SA de CV, Casa de Bolsa, regulated by the Comisión Nacional Bancaria y de Valores; BofAS Japan: BofA Securities Japan Co., Ltd., regulated by the Financial Services Agency; Merrill Lynch (Seoul): Merrill Lynch International, LLC Seoul Branch, regulated by the Financial Supervisory Service; Merrill Lynch (Taiwan): Merrill Lynch Securities (Taiwan) Ltd., regulated by the Securities and Futures Bureau; BofAS India: BofA Securities India Limited, regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI); Merrill Lynch (Israel): Merrill Lynch Israel Limited, regulated by Israel Securities Authority; Merrill Lynch (DIFC): Merrill Lynch International (DIFC Branch), regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA); Merrill Lynch (Brazil): Merrill Lynch S.A. Corretora de Títulos e Valores Mobiliários, regulated by Comissão de Valores Mobiliários; Merrill Lynch KSA Company: Merrill Lynch Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Company, regulated by the Capital Market Authority.

This information has been approved for publication and is distributed in the United Kingdom (UK) to professional clients and eligible counterparties (as each is defined in the rules of the FCA and the PRA) by MLI (UK), which is authorized by the PRA and regulated by the FCA and the PRA - details about the extent of our regulation by the FCA and PRA are available from us on request;



has been approved for publication and is distributed in the European Economic Area (EEA) by BofASE (France), which is authorized by the ACPR and regulated by the ACPR and the AMF; has been considered and distributed in Japan by BofAS Japan, a registered securities dealer under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act in Japan, or its permitted affiliates; is issued and distributed in Hong Kong by Merrill Lynch (Hong Kong) which is regulated by HKSF; is issued and distributed in Taiwan by Merrill Lynch (Taiwan); is issued and distributed in India by BofAS India; and is issued and distributed in Singapore to institutional investors and/or accredited investors (each as defined under the Financial Advisers Regulations) by Merrill Lynch (Singapore) (Company Registration No 198602883D). Merrill Lynch (Singapore) is regulated by MAS. Merrill Lynch Equities (Australia) Limited (ABN 65 006 276 795), AFS License 235132 (MLEA) distributes this information in Australia only to 'Wholesale' clients as defined by s.761G of the Corporations Act 2001. With the exception of Bank of America N.A., Australia Branch, neither MLEA nor any of its affiliates involved in preparing this information is an Authorised Deposit-Taking Institution under the Banking Act 1959 nor regulated by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority. No approval is required for publication or distribution of this information in Brazil and its local distribution is by Merrill Lynch (Brazil) in accordance with applicable regulations. Merrill Lynch (DIFC) is authorized and regulated by the DFSA. Information prepared and issued by Merrill Lynch (DIFC) is done so in accordance with the requirements of the DFSA conduct of business rules. BofA Europe (Frankfurt) distributes this information in Germany and is regulated by BaFin, the ECB and the CBI. BofA Securities entities, including BofA Europe and BofASE (France), may outsource/delegate the marketing and/or provision of certain research services or aspects of research services to other branches or members of the BofA Securities group. You may be contacted by a different BofA Securities entity acting for and on behalf of your service provider where permitted by applicable law. This does not change your service provider. Please refer to the [Electronic Communications Disclaimers](#) for further information.

This information has been prepared and issued by BofAS and/or one or more of its non-US affiliates. The author(s) of this information may not be licensed to carry on regulated activities in your jurisdiction and, if not licensed, do not hold themselves out as being able to do so. BofAS and/or MLPF&S is the distributor of this information in the US and accepts full responsibility for information distributed to BofAS and/or MLPF&S clients in the US by its non-US affiliates. Any US person receiving this information and wishing to effect any transaction in any security discussed herein should do so through BofAS and/or MLPF&S and not such foreign affiliates. Hong Kong recipients of this information should contact Merrill Lynch (Asia Pacific) Limited in respect of any matters relating to dealing in securities or provision of specific advice on securities or any other matters arising from, or in connection with, this information. Singapore recipients of this information should contact Merrill Lynch (Singapore) Pte Ltd in respect of any matters arising from, or in connection with, this information. For clients that are not accredited investors, expert investors or institutional investors Merrill Lynch (Singapore) Pte Ltd accepts full responsibility for the contents of this information distributed to such clients in Singapore.

General Investment Related Disclosures:

Taiwan Readers: Neither the information nor any opinion expressed herein constitutes an offer or a solicitation of an offer to transact in any securities or other financial instrument. No part of this report may be used or reproduced or quoted in any manner whatsoever in Taiwan by the press or any other person without the express written consent of BofA Securities.

This document provides general information only, and has been prepared for, and is intended for general distribution to, BofA Securities clients. Neither the information nor any opinion expressed constitutes an offer or an invitation to make an offer, to buy or sell any securities or other financial instrument or any derivative related to such securities or instruments (e.g., options, futures, warrants, and contracts for differences). This document is not intended to provide personal investment advice and it does not take into account the specific investment objectives, financial situation and the particular needs of, and is not directed to, any specific person(s). This document and its content do not constitute, and should not be considered to constitute, investment advice for purposes of ERISA, the US tax code, the Investment Advisers Act or otherwise. Investors should seek financial advice regarding the appropriateness of investing in financial instruments and implementing investment strategies discussed or recommended in this document and should understand that statements regarding future prospects may not be realized. Any decision to purchase or subscribe for securities in any offering must be based solely on existing public information on such security or the information in the prospectus or other offering document issued in connection with such offering, and not on this document.

Securities and other financial instruments referred to herein, or recommended, offered or sold by BofA Securities, are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and are not deposits or other obligations of any insured depository institution (including, Bank of America, N.A.). Investments in general and, derivatives, in particular, involve numerous risks, including, among others, market risk, counterparty default risk and liquidity risk. No security, financial instrument or derivative is suitable for all investors. Digital assets are extremely speculative, volatile and are largely unregulated. In some cases, securities and other financial instruments may be difficult to value or sell and reliable information about the value or risks related to the security or financial instrument may be difficult to obtain. Investors should note that income from such securities and other financial instruments, if any, may fluctuate and that price or value of such securities and instruments may rise or fall and, in some cases, investors may lose their entire principal investment. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Levels and basis for taxation may change.

This report may contain a short-term trading idea or recommendation, which highlights a specific near-term catalyst or event impacting the issuer or the market that is anticipated to have a short-term price impact on the equity securities of the issuer. Short-term trading ideas and recommendations are different from and do not affect a stock's fundamental equity rating, which reflects both a longer term total return expectation and attractiveness for investment relative to other stocks within its Coverage Cluster. Short-term trading ideas and recommendations may be more or less positive than a stock's fundamental equity rating.

BofA Securities is aware that the implementation of the ideas expressed in this report may depend upon an investor's ability to "short" securities or other financial instruments and that such action may be limited by regulations prohibiting or restricting "shortselling" in many jurisdictions. Investors are urged to seek advice regarding the applicability of such regulations prior to executing any short idea contained in this report.

Foreign currency rates of exchange may adversely affect the value, price or income of any security or financial instrument mentioned herein. Investors in such securities and instruments, including ADRs, effectively assume currency risk.

BofAS or one of its affiliates is a regular issuer of traded financial instruments linked to securities that may have been recommended in this report. BofAS or one of its affiliates may, at any time, hold a trading position (long or short) in the securities and financial instruments discussed in this report.

BofA Securities, through business units other than BofA Global Research, may have issued and may in the future issue trading ideas or recommendations that are inconsistent with, and reach different conclusions from, the information presented herein. Such ideas or recommendations may reflect different time frames, assumptions, views and analytical methods of the persons who prepared them, and BofA Securities is under no obligation to ensure that such other trading ideas or recommendations are brought to the attention of any recipient of this information.

In the event that the recipient received this information pursuant to a contract between the recipient and BofAS for the provision of research services for a separate fee, and in connection therewith BofAS may be deemed to be acting as an investment adviser, such status relates, if at all, solely to the person with whom BofAS has contracted directly and does not extend beyond the delivery of this report (unless otherwise agreed specifically in writing by BofAS). If such recipient uses the services of BofAS in connection with the sale or purchase of a security referred to herein, BofAS may act as principal for its own account or as agent for another person. BofAS is and continues to act solely as a broker-dealer in connection with the execution of any transactions, including transactions in any securities referred to herein.

Copyright and General Information:

Copyright 2026 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved. iQDatabase® is a registered service mark of Bank of America Corporation. This information is prepared for the use of BofA Securities clients and may not be redistributed, retransmitted or disclosed, in whole or in part, or in any form or manner, without the express written consent of BofA Securities. This document and its content is provided solely for informational purposes and cannot be used for training or developing artificial intelligence (AI) models or as an input in any AI application (collectively, an AI tool). Any attempt to utilize this document or any of its content in connection with an AI tool without explicit written permission from BofA Global Research is strictly prohibited. BofA Global Research utilizes AI, including machine learning and other technologies, to enhance the services we provide to our clients. These technologies assist our analysts in various aspects of their work, including but not limited to data analysis, content extraction, content creation, data aggregation and summarization and identifying relevant information from diverse sources. All AI-driven processes are subject to review by BofA Global Research employees. BofA Global Research information is distributed simultaneously to internal and client websites and other portals by BofA Securities and is not publicly-available material. Any unauthorized use or disclosure is prohibited. Receipt and review of this information constitutes your agreement not to redistribute, retransmit, or disclose to others the contents, opinions, conclusion, or information contained herein (including any investment recommendations, estimates or price targets) without first obtaining express permission from an authorized officer of BofA Securities.

Materials prepared by BofA Global Research personnel are based on public information. Facts and views presented in this material have not been reviewed by, and may not reflect information known to, professionals in other business areas of BofA Securities, including investment banking personnel. BofA Securities has established information barriers between BofA Global Research and certain business groups. As a result, BofA Securities does not disclose certain client relationships with, or compensation received from, such issuers. To the extent this material discusses any legal proceeding or issues, it has not been prepared as nor is it intended to express any legal conclusion, opinion or advice. Investors should consult their own legal advisers as to issues of law relating to the subject matter of this material. BofA Global Research personnel's knowledge of legal proceedings in which any BofA Securities entity and/or its directors, officers and employees may be plaintiffs, defendants, co-defendants or co-plaintiffs with or involving issuers mentioned in this material is based on public information. Facts and views presented in this material that relate to any such proceedings have not been reviewed by, discussed with, and may not reflect information known to, professionals in other business areas of BofA Securities in connection with the legal proceedings or matters relevant to such proceedings.



This information has been prepared independently of any issuer of securities mentioned herein and not in connection with any proposed offering of securities or as agent of any issuer of any securities. None of BofAS any of its affiliates or their research analysts has any authority whatsoever to make any representation or warranty on behalf of the issuer(s). BofA Global Research policy prohibits research personnel from disclosing a recommendation, investment rating, or investment thesis for review by an issuer prior to the publication of a research report containing such rating, recommendation or investment thesis.

Any information relating to sustainability in this material is limited as discussed herein and is not intended to provide a comprehensive view on any sustainability claim with respect to any issuer or security.

Any information relating to the tax status of financial instruments discussed herein is not intended to provide tax advice or to be used by anyone to provide tax advice. Investors are urged to seek tax advice based on their particular circumstances from an independent tax professional.

The information herein (other than disclosure information relating to BofA Securities and its affiliates) was obtained from various sources and we do not guarantee its accuracy. This information may contain links to third-party websites. BofA Securities is not responsible for the content of any third-party website or any linked content contained in a third-party website. Content contained on such third-party websites is not part of this information and is not incorporated by reference. The inclusion of a link does not imply any endorsement by or any affiliation with BofA Securities. Access to any third-party website is at your own risk, and you should always review the terms and privacy policies at third-party websites before submitting any personal information to them. BofA Securities is not responsible for such terms and privacy policies and expressly disclaims any liability for them.

All opinions, projections and estimates constitute the judgment of the author as of the date of publication and are subject to change without notice. Prices also are subject to change without notice. BofA Securities is under no obligation to update this information and BofA Securities ability to publish information on the subject issuer(s) in the future is subject to applicable quiet periods. You should therefore assume that BofA Securities will not update any fact, circumstance or opinion contained herein.

Certain outstanding reports or investment opinions relating to securities, financial instruments and/or issuers may no longer be current. Always refer to the most recent research report relating to an issuer prior to making an investment decision.

In some cases, an issuer may be classified as Restricted or may be Under Review or Extended Review. In each case, investors should consider any investment opinion relating to such issuer (or its security and/or financial instruments) to be suspended or withdrawn and should not rely on the analyses and investment opinion(s) pertaining to such issuer (or its securities and/or financial instruments) nor should the analyses or opinion(s) be considered a solicitation of any kind. Sales persons and financial advisors affiliated with BofAS or any of its affiliates may not solicit purchases of securities or financial instruments that are Restricted or Under Review and may only solicit securities under Extended Review in accordance with firm policies.

Neither BofA Securities nor any officer or employee of BofA Securities accepts any liability whatsoever for any direct, indirect or consequential damages or losses arising from any use of this information.

