

Dear clients, Dear readers,

The third quarter of 2025 went smoothly for the stock markets, despite a highly uncertain environment marked by the trade war, geopolitical risks and several persistent conflicts. Investors showed some resilience, though there is clearly some apprehension in the face of high valuations, particularly in the US.

As for the trade war, the United States and the European Union reached an agreement in July for tariffs of 15% on most European goods exported to the United States, lower than the higher tariffs initially announced by Donald Trump. In return, the European Union has pledged to invest massively in the United States and to buy a considerable amount of US energy products. This agreement temporarily allayed fears of retaliatory tariffs but some commentators remain cautious: the actual implementation, timing and repercussions are yet to be measured.

On monetary policy, after two interest rate cuts in March and June 2025, the European Central Bank (ECB) paused its action to assess the impact of its decisions. Although inflation has eased, it remains above the 2% target, prompting the bank to be cautious. The ECB therefore chose to keep rates on hold to keep room for manoeuvre in the face of economic uncertainties, linked in particular to disruptions in supply chains and the high cost of energy in certain regions.

In the United States, as expected, the Federal Reserve (Fed) cut its key rates in mid-September for the first time this year, by 0.25%. This decision was in response to the weakening of the labour market, which is now considered more worrying than inflation. Rates are now in the range of 4% to 4.25%. At that meeting, a narrow majority of members left the door open for two more cuts by the end of the year.

The Fed has so far maintained its independence despite Donald Trump's attempts to interfere in its governance. The failed attempt to sack a Fed governor, however, rekindled concerns about the institution's independence, which is a key pillar for market confidence.

On a global scale, growth is continuing to slow. The IMF forecasts around 3% growth for 2025, down from its previous estimates. The World Bank and other institutions have similar projections. International trade continues to suffer from both tariffs and lower external demand, particularly from China, where significant imbalances persist: low domestic consumption, the weak real estate sector, and increased exposure to external trade policies.

In commodities, gold stood out from the crowd and reached new highs. It has risen by 47% (in USD terms) since the beginning of the year, driven by expectations of monetary easing, the weakness of the dollar, inflationary concerns, geopolitical tensions, doubts about the independence of the Fed and massive purchases by central banks. It is heading for its best annual performance since 1979, when prices jumped 127% in the wake of the oil crisis triggered by the Islamic revolution in Iran, which fuelled a spike in inflation and pushed investors into gold.

Meanwhile, oil prices have continued to fall this year (-10.2%) due to abundant global supply, less discipline by some OPEC+ countries and signs of weaker demand, particularly in the United States.



As for the dollar, it has fallen by 13.3% since 1 January. Expectations of Fed rate cuts, combined with weaker US economic sentiment, are putting downward pressure on the currency. And Donald Trump makes no secret of the fact that he is in favour of an even weaker dollar to make American companies more competitive.

Performance of the main markets in 2025

	September 2025	2025 YTD
EURO STOXX 50	3,33%	12,95%
STOXX Europe 600	1,46%	9,96%
BEL 20	0,46%	13,04%
S&P 500	3,53%	13,72%
S&P 500 Equal Weight	0,57%	8,26%
NASDAQ 100	5,40%	17,46%
NIKKEI 225	5,18%	12,63%
HANG SENG	7,09%	33,88%
MSCI EMERGING	6,96%	25,16%
MSCI WORLD	3,09%	16,15%

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