Investment Policy

April 2024

BOREAL
CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Our market view in a nutshell – April 2024

- The **US economy continues to show strength**, with fourth-quarter GDP surpassing expectations. Job creation continues outpacing forecasts, while unemployment has dipped further. Consumer confidence remains high thanks to a strong labor market and historically elevated wealth levels, driven by equity markets nearing all-time highs – a trend mirrored by home prices.

- Unsurprisingly, **the pace of decline in inflation has slowed**. Core inflation appears to be plateauing around 3.8%, still far above the Fed's target of 2%. While most inflation components have retreated to pre-pandemic levels, **services inflation remains stubbornly elevated** at 5.4%. Shelter costs are still the primary driver, and the resumption of home price increases complicates the picture. Additionally, transportation and healthcare expenses are also rising again, particularly due to increased insurance prices.

- There is a **potential for further upward pressure on prices** as the manufacturing sector emerges from the contraction that began in October 2022. This could lead to renewed consumer goods inflation and indirectly impact energy prices. While **energy costs remain relatively contained despite ongoing tensions** in the Middle East and the war in Ukraine, they are no longer contributing to reducing inflation.

- A strong economy coupled with slower disinflation is **prompting the Fed to postpone interest rate cuts**. The Fed's pivot toward a looser monetary policy in December may seem premature in retrospect. However, it served as a **signal, allowing the Fed to maintain flexibility and support a soft landing of the economy**.

- **Equity markets, lately insensitive to interest rate expectations, have begun to correct** as the likelihood of rate cuts diminishes. With the first-quarter earnings season under way, **only improved corporate earnings can justify current valuations**. Bond markets have also experienced volatility as the entire US Treasury yield curve has shifted upward, nearing the 5% level observed in October. Despite this move, or perhaps because of it, **bonds remain attractive**.

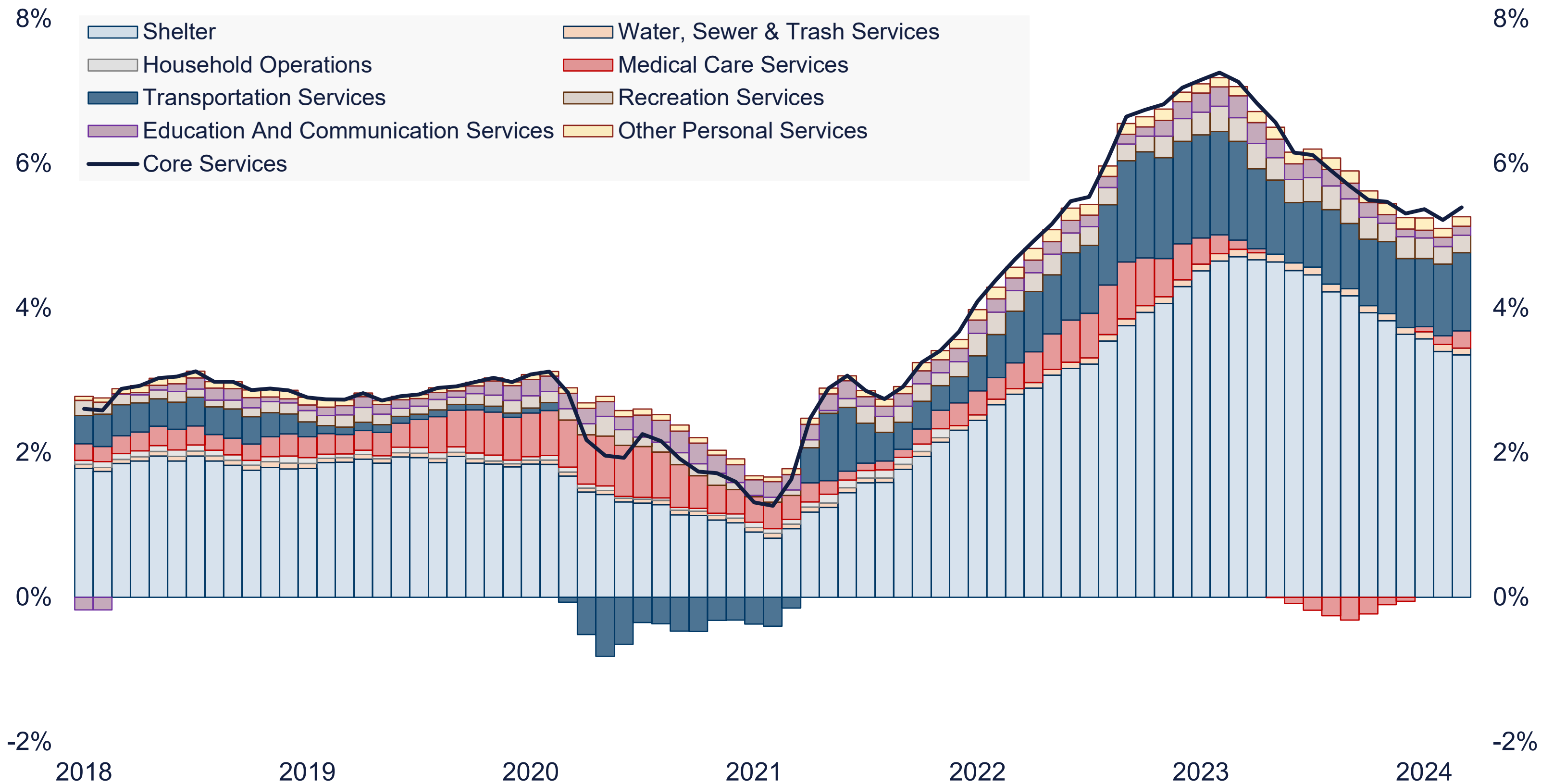
Boreal Investment Policy

BOREAL
CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Asset Class		View	Rationale
Fixed Income	US Investment Grade	+	Treasury bonds offer protection against an economic slowdown and / or increased risk aversion. Given the binary macroeconomic risks we are facing (stagflation vs. recession), we favor TIPS and short-duration bonds
	US Credit	+	The Fed's recent shift in policy has reduced the likelihood of a recession. While credit spreads have narrowed, they remain attractive as the default rate is anticipated to stay low
	EU Investment Grade	+	The decisive action of the ECB and the widening of corporate spreads has caused high-quality euro-denominated debt to begin to offer an acceptable risk-adjusted return
	European Credit	=	Prospects for European credit have improved since it is expected that the ECB will follow the Fed in lowering rates. However, the European economy remains more vulnerable to a downturn
	Emerging Markets	=	The prospect of a weaker dollar spurred by the Fed's interest rate cuts has marginally enhanced the appeal of emerging market debt
Equities	US	+	After the sharp sell-off, valuations have improved. We maintain our exposure to US equities, mostly through quality and growth-oriented companies
	Europe	=	The European economy has emerged from the pandemic faster and stronger than many expected. However, the continent is more exposed to the falling out with Russia
	Asia	=	We recommend investing selectively in the region
	Emerging Markets	−	Emerging market stocks tend to be more cyclical, and there are fewer quality stocks. Russian sanctions and regulatory pressure on China have increased the risk premium
	Sectors & Themes	+	To complement our core allocation, we favor Healthcare and companies that pay sustainable dividends
Alternative Investments	Multi-Strategy Hedge Funds	−	Multi-strategy / multi-manager hedge funds with daily liquidity are having a disappointing performance, particularly when compared with other less risky alternatives, like short-term corporate bonds
	Commodities	=	Commodity prices have been driven up by (and not caused by) inflation, as well as the war in Ukraine. We do not expect these levels to be sustainable in the long term
	Private Equity	=	Investing in late-stage private equity provides access to the asset class with liquidity provision up to a certain degree

\+ Overweight − Underweight = Neutral

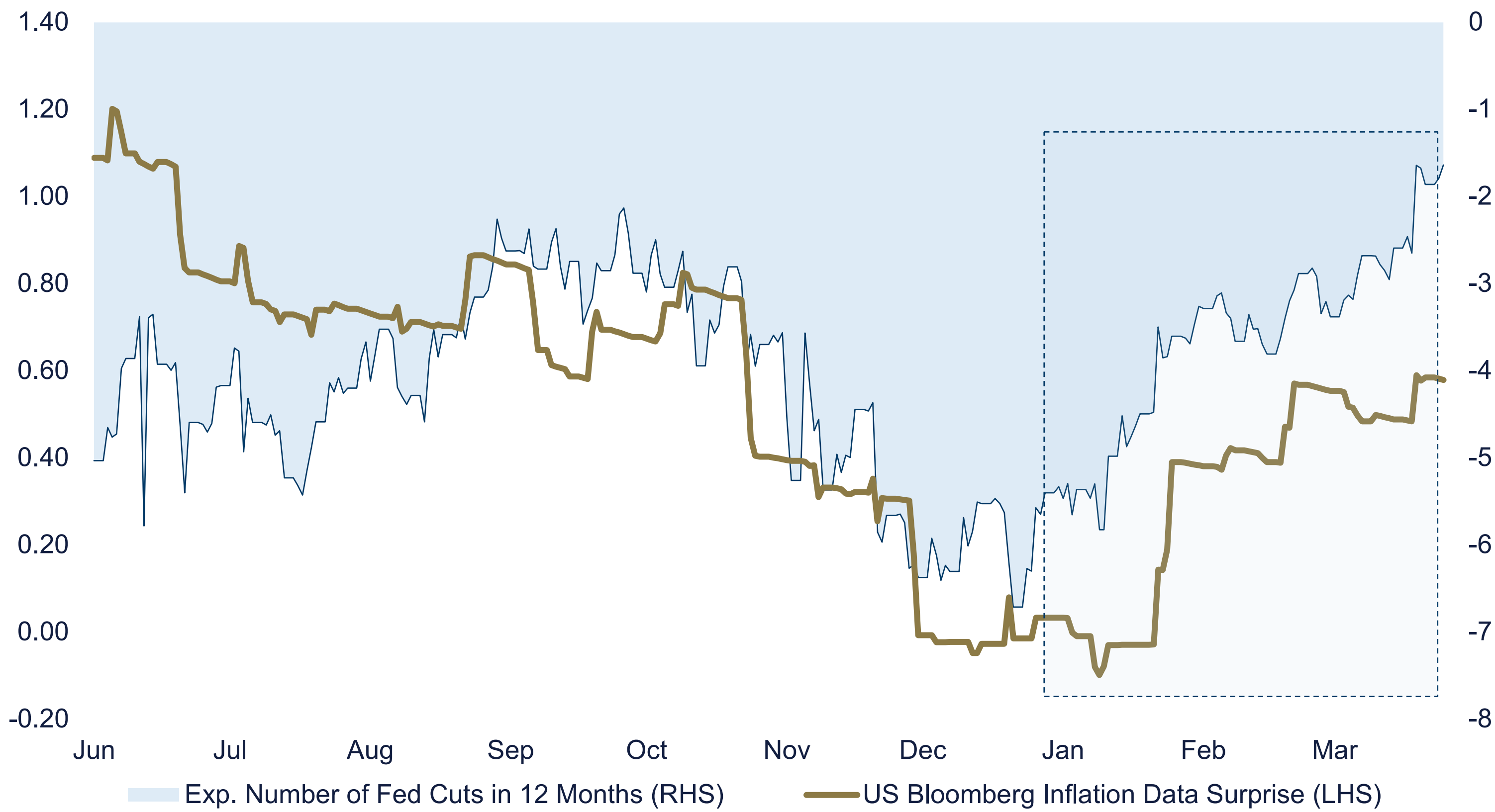
Plateauing?



- The **downward trend in inflation has shown signs of plateauing**. In March, headline inflation climbed to match levels seen in August of last year. Core inflation appears to be stabilizing around 3.8%, well above the Fed's target of 2%.
- **Core services inflation remains stubbornly elevated** at 5.4%, and prices for energy and consumer goods are at risk of accelerating due to the pickup in economic activity and geopolitical tensions.

Source: Bloomberg

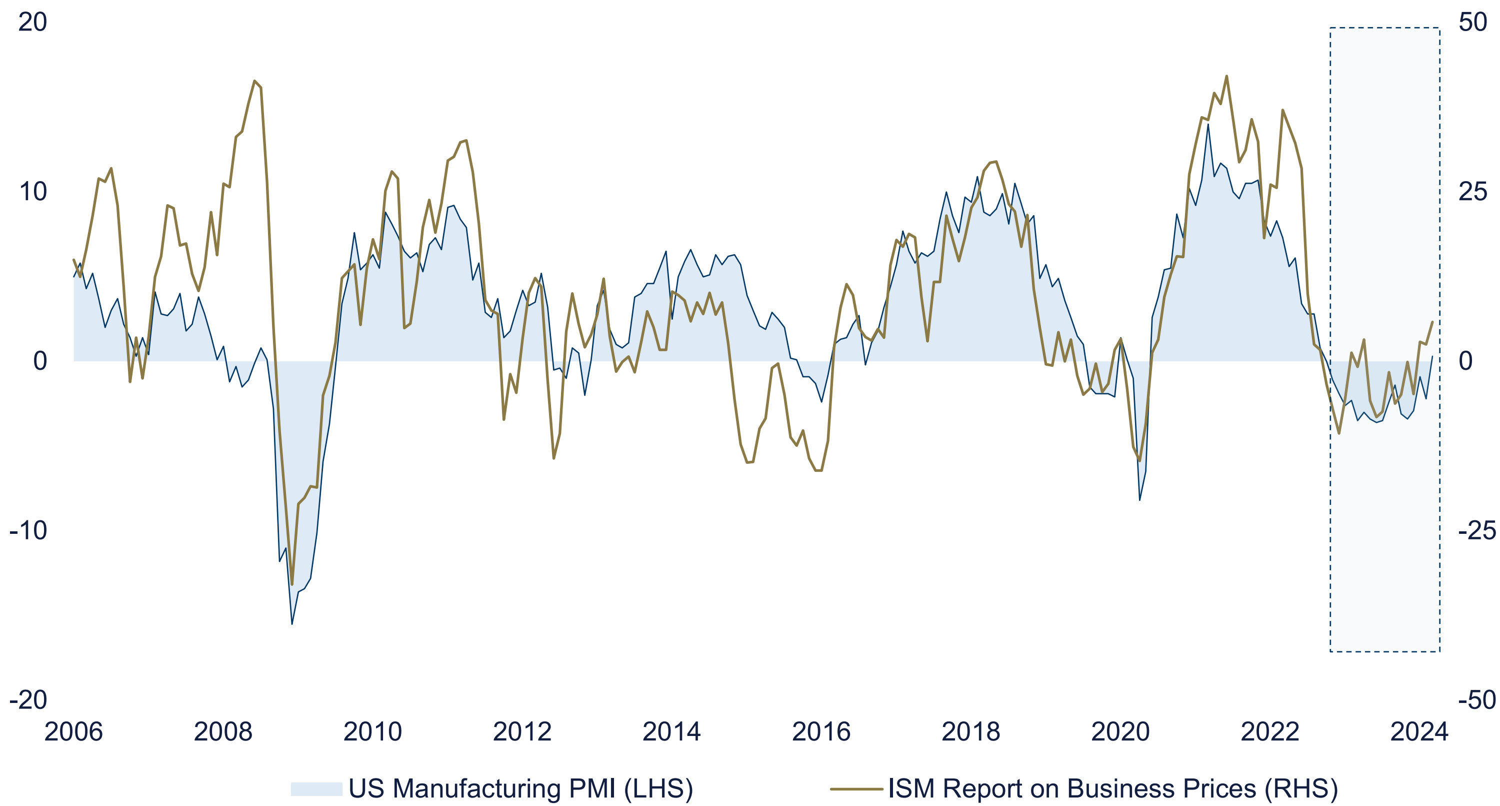
Fed pivots again



- Inflation has proven much stickier than anticipated amid a resilient economy and labor market. **Inflation readings have disappointed over the past five months**.
- As a result, **the Fed has stepped back from its dovish stance in December**, indicating that persistent inflation means borrowing costs will stay elevated for longer than previously thought.

Source: Bloomberg

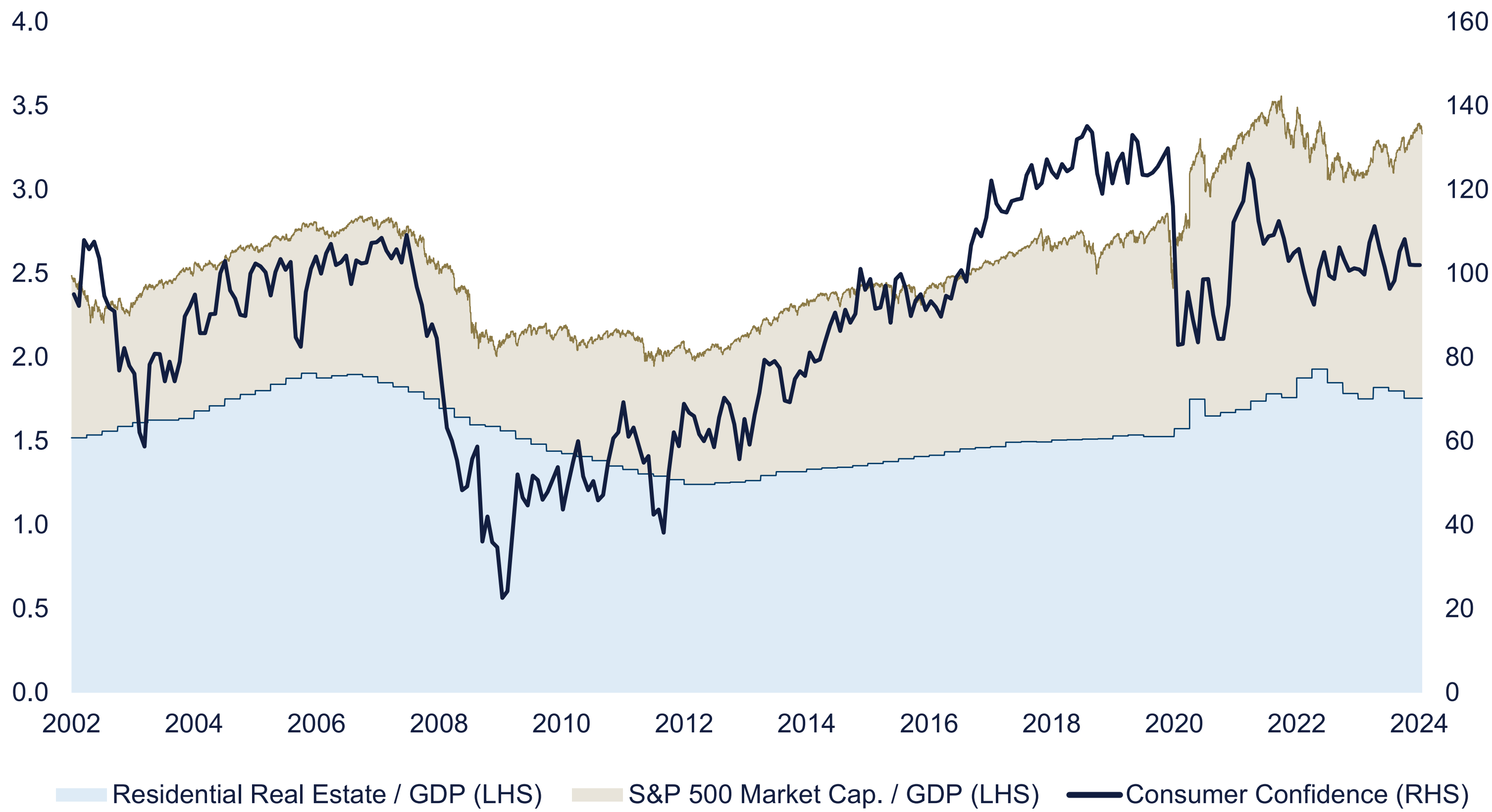
Manufacturing rebounds after long slump



- It is **premature to talk about a Fed policy mistake**. By signaling its willingness to lower interest rates, the Fed has provided support for the economy and helped avoid a recession.
- This is already evident in the **pickup of manufacturing activity**, which has finally reversed course and is now expanding after 18 months of contraction

Source: Bloomberg

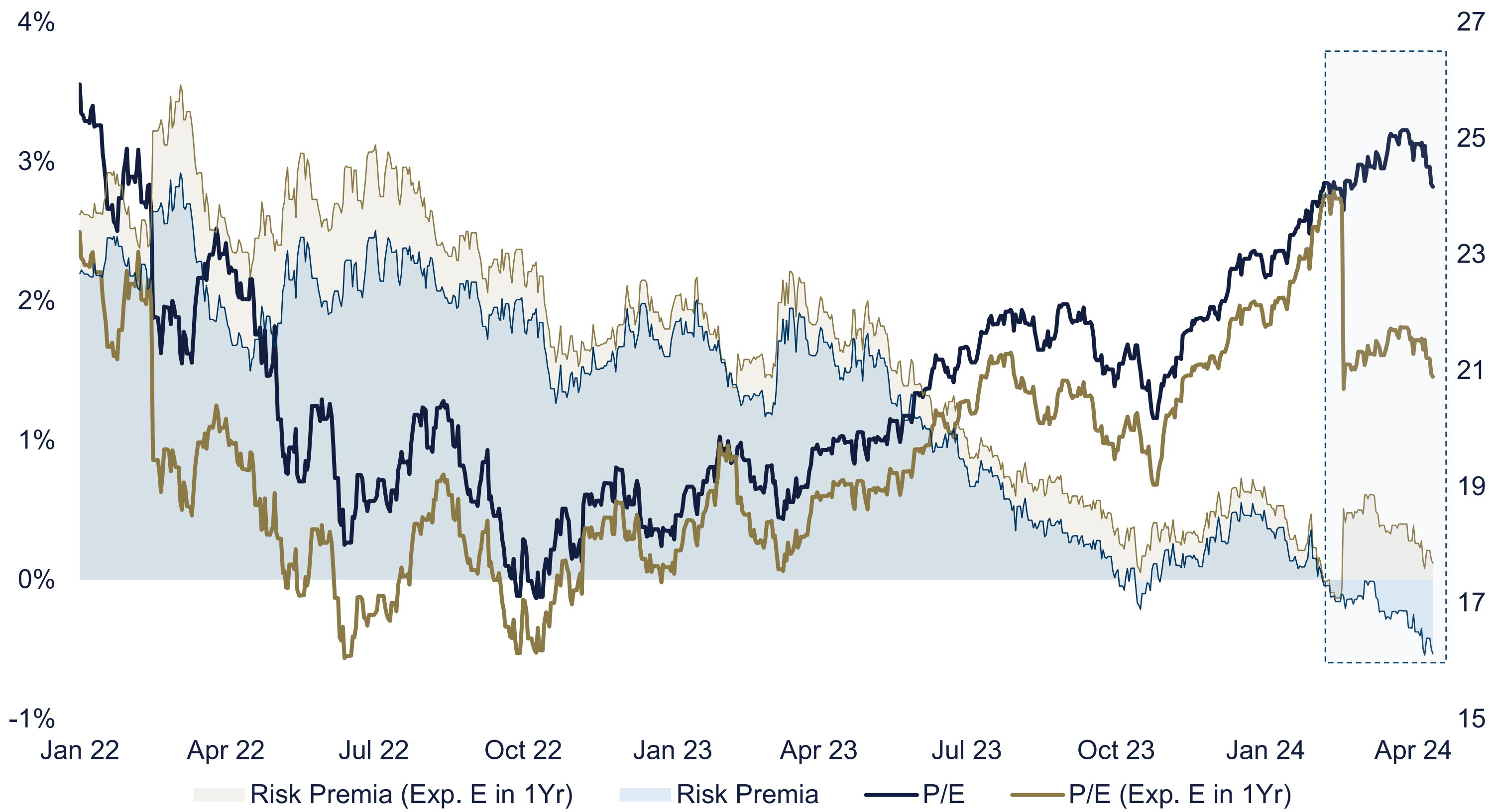
Asset prices underpin consumption



- The **Fed's pivot has also helped support both equity and real estate markets**. While rising real estate prices can boost household wealth and spending, it also has a **negative impact on inflation**.
- Additionally, this **dependency on asset prices poses a risk**, as a correction (especially if interest rates stay high for an extended period) could have the opposite effect on consumption.

Source: Bloomberg

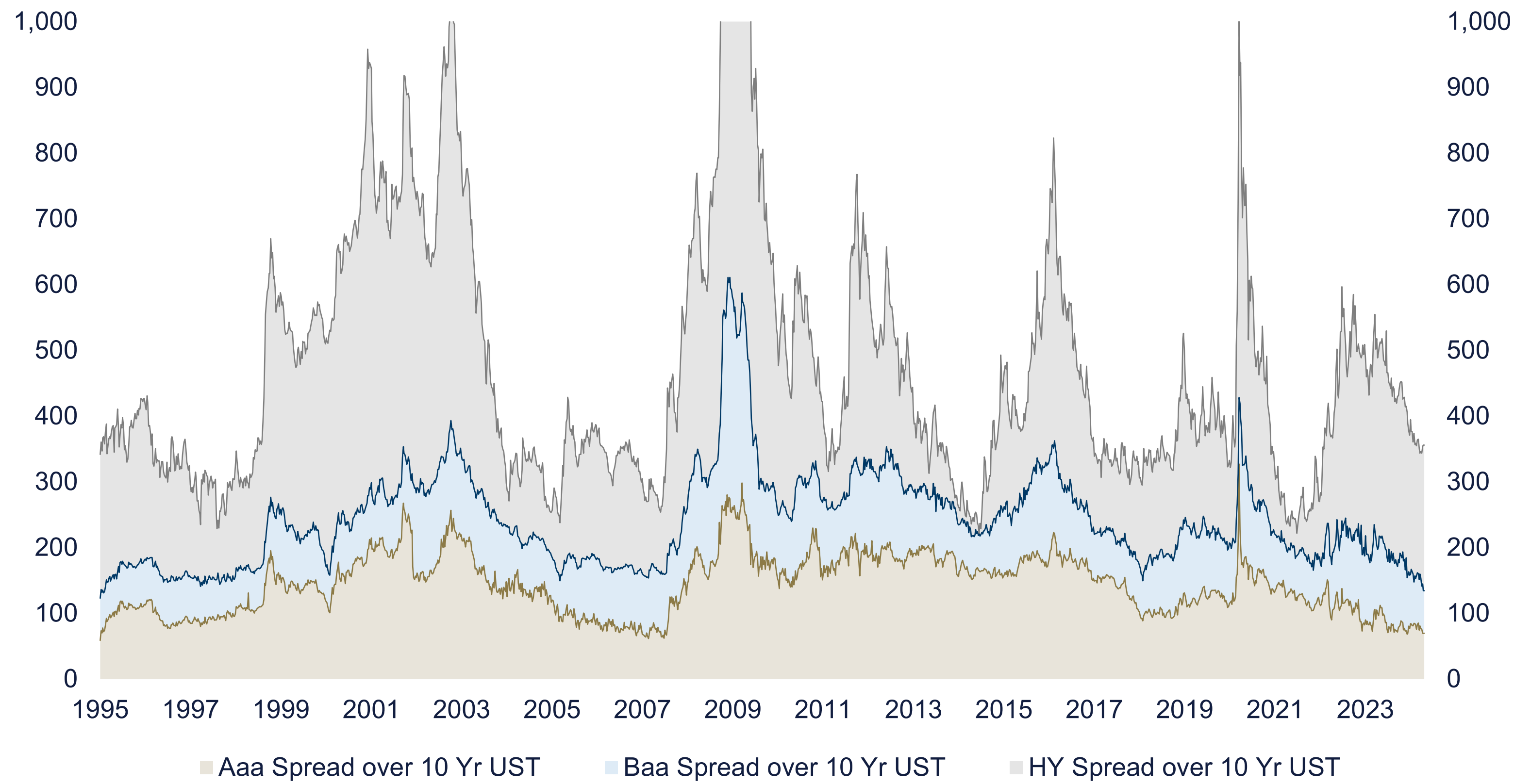
Earnings growth and lower rates needed to justify stock prices



- Equity valuations remain high compared to current earnings, but **analysts predict earnings growth in the coming quarters**.
- If corporate profits do rise as expected, **valuations would appear less stretched**. However, they would remain **elevated relative to bonds** unless interest rates fall.

Source: Bloomberg

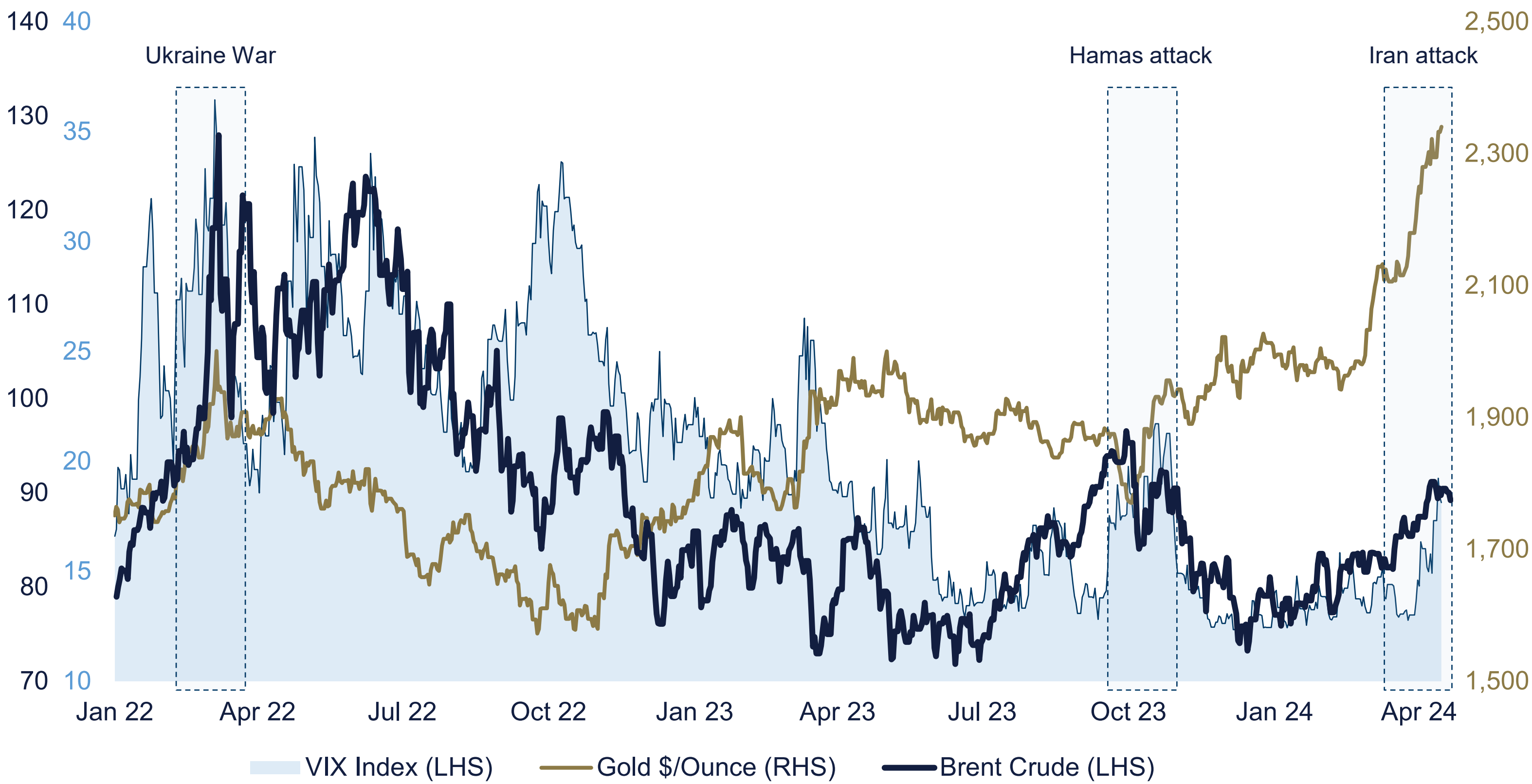
Spreads are tight, but carry offers support



- Corporate bond **spreads are currently very narrow compared to historical averages**, especially for high-quality bonds
- However, the **current level of carry (additional return from interest payments) offers enough cushion** to withstand a period of moderate stress in credit markets.

Source: Bloomberg

Geopolitical risks rising, but contained



- **Geopolitical tensions are on the rise**. The recent direct attack on Israel by Iran in retaliation for an attack on senior officials in Lebanon is an unprecedented escalation between the two countries. Similar to the war in Ukraine, **markets are expecting the conflicts to remain geographically contained**.
- However, if either conflict escalates, there is a **risk of another energy shock** that could derail efforts to bring inflation back to normal levels.

Source: Bloomberg

Investment scenarios

	Scenario 1 Policy Mistake	Scenario 2 “Boiling Frog”	Scenario 3 “Soft landing”
Drivers	• Sticky inflation persists amid a hot labor market and resilient housing prices, with core services inflation defying the Fed´s 2% target • The Fed must reverse course and implement further tightening, keeping interest rates elevated for longer • Macroeconomic uncertainty and market volatility increase. Long-term interest rates pick up again along with inflation expectations	• Consumption, which has barely budged despite the sharp increase in borrowing costs, finally adjusts • Firms, which in the face of a tight labor market have been reluctant to lay off workers despite higher costs and sluggish profitability, begin to restructure • In order to help the economy, the Fed is forced to loosen monetary policy aggressively, but it is too late to prevent the economy falling into recession	• Fiscal policy remains accommodative, and the economy continues to grow, avoiding a recession • The Fed pauses rate hikes and eases policy. Inflation continues normalizing without the economy slowing down significantly • The yield curve steepens, credit spreads narrow further, and corporate earnings resume growth. It is the beginning of a new economic cycle
Market impact	• Corporate profits rise if inflation is caused by strong economic growth, but higher interest rates have a negative impact on equity valuations • High-quality and sovereign bonds fall due to rising interest rates • Credit performs relatively better despite higher rates, as the risk of corporate defaults remains low • The US dollar appreciates against safe-haven currencies as long as the economy remains strong. Gold gains as inflation expectations get de-anchored	• Equity markets fall, and cyclicals underperform quality and defensive stocks • Credit spreads widen sharply as the prospect of corporate defaults looms • Sovereign debt appreciates due to "flight to quality“ and lower interest rates. Commodity prices will fall. • The US dollar will depreciate if the Fed leads the way cutting interest rates and / or if the economic slowdown is not a global phenomenon. Otherwise, "flight to quality“ will support the US dollar	• Equity markets rally, as the economy returns to the “Goldilocks”, and valuation multiples widen • Credit spreads tighten further as investors chase yield again • High-quality and sovereign debt trade range-bound • Commodity prices stabilize. The fate of the US dollar is determined by growth differentials and real interest rate differentials
Probability	20%	25%	55%

Short-term catalyzers

Peace agreement in Ukraine, Slowdown in inflation, Supply chain problems continue to ease

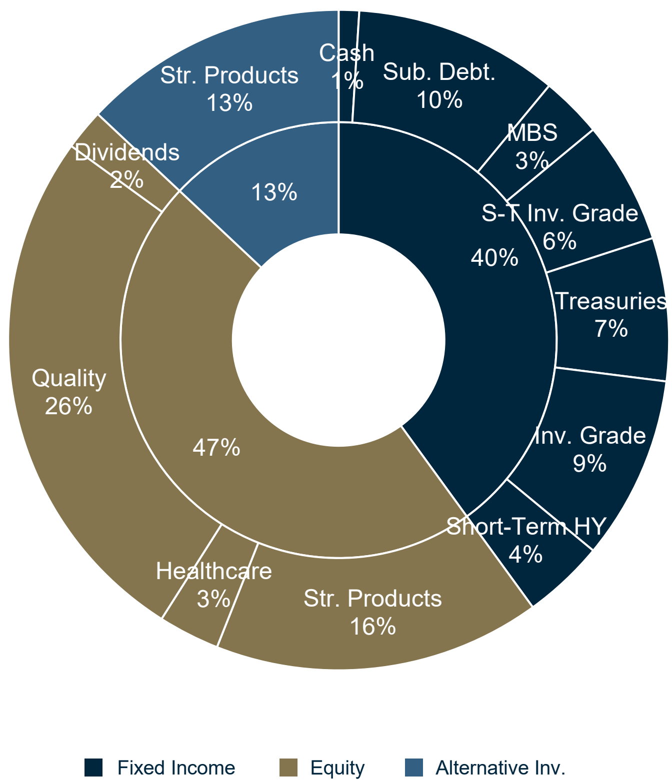
Other risks

US Presidential Election, Debt ceiling, Banking crisis, Escalation of geopolitical tensions, China slowdown, Housing market correction

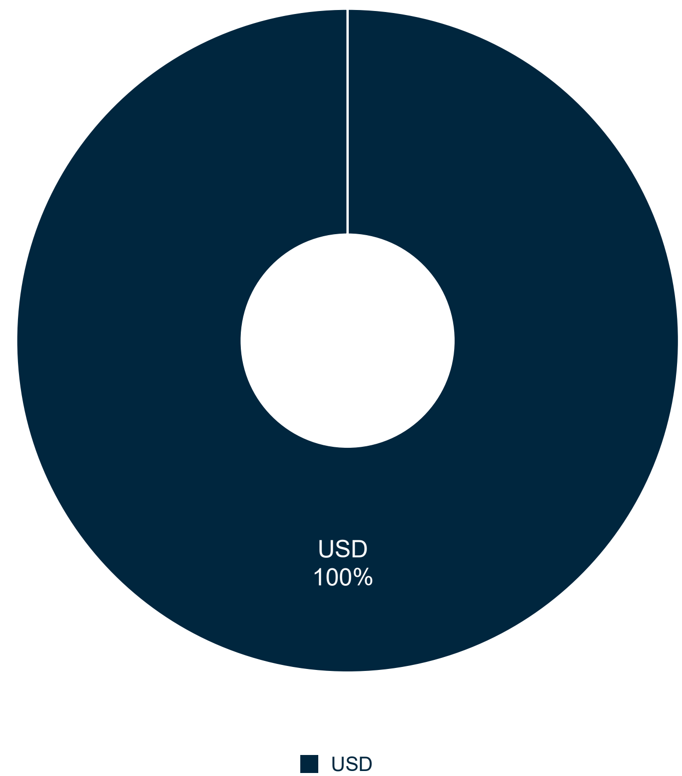
Boreal Balanced Portfolio USD

BOREAL CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

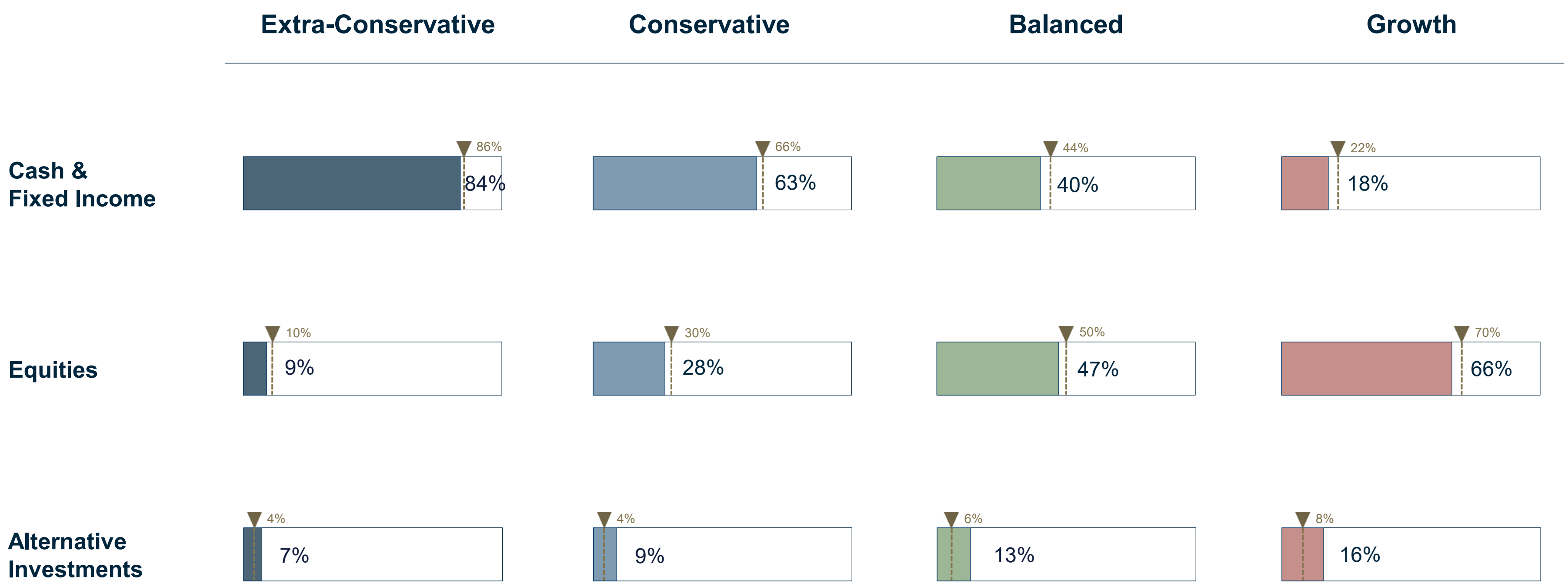
Asset Allocation



Currency Allocation

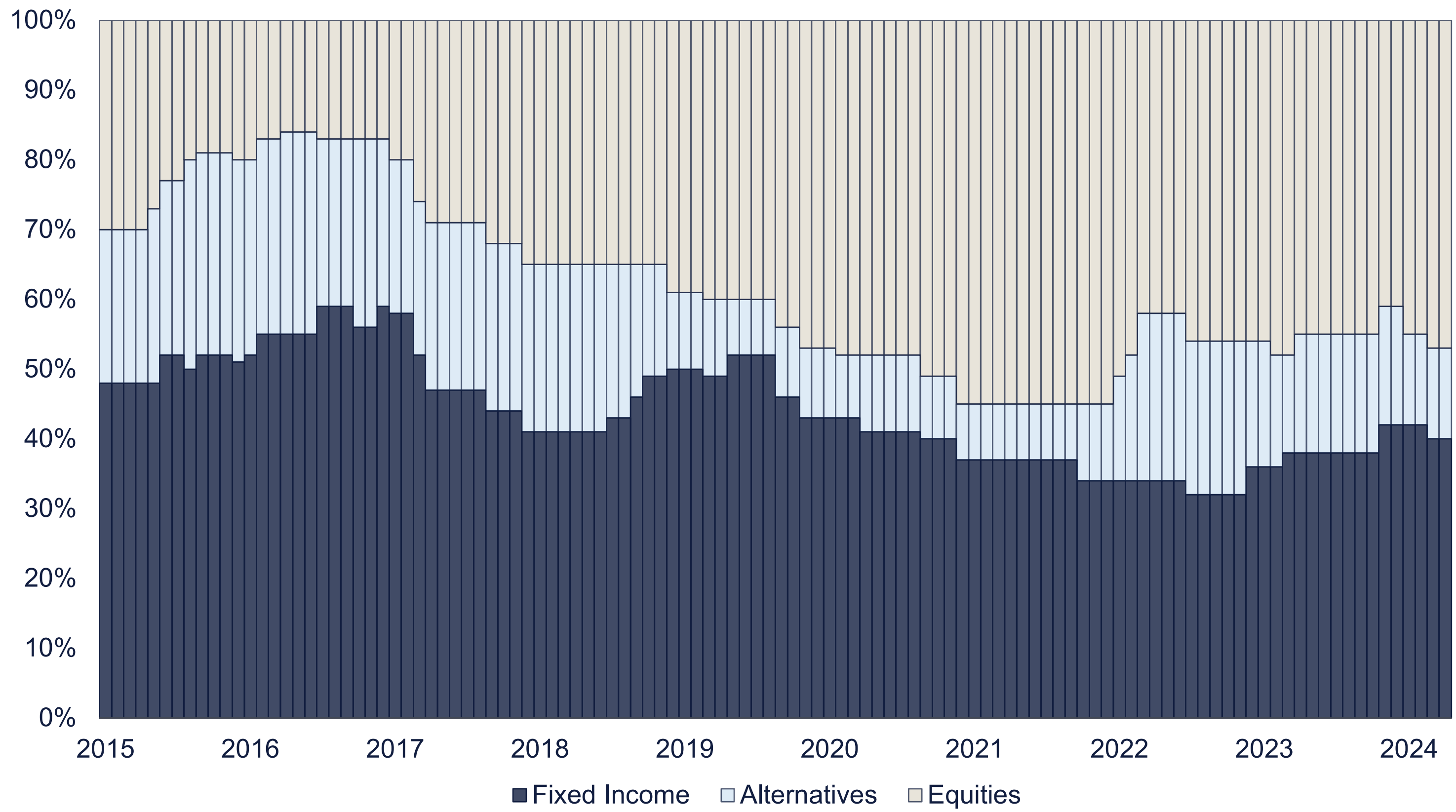


Boreal Investment Profiles



▼ Strategic Asset Allocation

Boreal Balanced Portfolio – Asset Allocation evolution



Legal Disclaimer Boreal Capital Management LLC, Boreal Capital Securities LLC and Boreal Capital Holdings LLC

Investment advisory products and services, are provided by Boreal Capital Management LLC, an investment adviser regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission; investment products, trade execution and other services may be offered by Boreal Capital Securities LLC, a member of the FINRA and SIPC. Boreal Capital Management LLC and Boreal Capital Securities LLC are subsidiaries of Boreal Capital Holdings LLC.

Boreal Capital Holdings LLC, Boreal Capital Management LLC and Boreal Capital Securities LLC, their affiliates, and the directors, officers, employees and agents (collectively, “Boreal”) are not permitted to give legal or tax advice. While Boreal can assist clients in the areas of estate and financial planning, only an attorney can draft legal documents and provide legal services and advice. Clients of Boreal should consult with their legal and tax advisors prior to entering into any financial transaction or estate plan. The opinions and information contained herein have been obtained or derived from sources believed to be reliable, but Boreal makes no representation or guarantee as to their timeliness, accuracy or completeness or for their fitness for any particular purpose. The information contained herein does not purport to be a complete analysis of any security, company, or industry involved. This material is not to be construed as an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any security. Opinions and information expressed herein are subject to change without notice. Boreal and/or its affiliates may have issued materials that are inconsistent with, or may reach different conclusions than, those represented in this document, and all opinions and information are believed to be reflective of judgments and opinions as of the date that material was originally published. Boreal is under no obligation to ensure that other materials are brought to the attention of any recipient of this document.

The information and material presented herein are for general information only and do not specifically address individual investment objectives, financial situations or the particular needs of any specific person who may receive this presentation. Investing in any security or investment strategies discussed herein may not be suitable for you, and you may want to consult a financial advisor. Nothing in this material constitutes individual investment, legal or tax advice. Investments involve risk and any investment may incur either profits or losses. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Unless otherwise stated, the portfolios and its performances herein do not account for costs, fees and / or charges, have no track record and have not been independently audited. Boreal shall accept no liability for any loss arising from the use of this material, nor shall Boreal treat any recipient of this material as a customer or client simply by virtue of its receipt. The information herein is not intended for any person residing in any jurisdiction in which it is unlawful to distribute this material.

Securities investments, products and services:

- **Are not FDIC or Government Agency Insured**
- **Are not Bank Guaranteed • May Lose Value**
- **The information and materials presented here are not intended for persons in jurisdictions where it is unlawful to distribute such information and materials. For further information, please consult your legal advisor.**

Legal Disclaimer Boreal Capital Management AG

Investment advisory products and financial services are provided by Boreal Capital Management Ltd (“Boreal”), a Swiss external asset manager regulated by the SRO AOOS.

Boreal Capital Management Ltd is not permitted to give legal or tax advice. Only an attorney can draft legal documents and provide legal services and advice. Clients of Boreal should consult with their legal and tax advisors prior to entering into any financial transaction or estate plan.

The opinions and information contained herein have been obtained or derived from sources believed to be reliable, but Boreal makes no representation or guarantee as to their timeliness, accuracy or completeness or for their fitness for any particular purpose. The information contained herein does not purport to be a complete analysis of any security, company, or industry involved. Opinions and information expressed herein are subject to change without notice. Boreal and/or its affiliates may have issued materials that are inconsistent with or may reach different conclusions than those represented in this document, and all opinions and information are believed to be reflective of judgments and opinions as of the date that material was originally published. Boreal is under no obligation to ensure that other materials are brought to the attention of any recipient of this document. Boreal accepts no liability whatsoever and makes no representation, warranty or undertaking, express or implied, for any information, projections or any of the opinions contained herein or for any errors, omissions or misstatements in the document. Boreal does not undertake to update this document or to correct any inaccuracies which may have become apparent after its publication.

This material is not to be construed as an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy any security nor a solicitation to buy, subscribe or sell any currency or product or financial instrument, make any investment or participate in any particular trading strategy in any jurisdiction where such an offer or solicitation would not be authorized or to any person to whom it would be unlawful to make such an offer or invitation. The information and material presented herein are for general information only and do not specifically address individual investment objectives, financial situations or the particular needs of any specific person who may receive this presentation. It does not replace a prospectus or any other legal document relating to any specific financial instrument which may be obtained upon request from the issuer of the financial product. In this document Boreal makes no representation as to the suitability or appropriateness of the described financial instruments or services for any recipient of this document nor to their future performance. Each investor must make their own independent decision regarding any securities or financial instruments mentioned in this document and should independently determine the merits or suitability of any investment. Before entering into any transaction, investors are invited to read carefully the risk warnings and the regulations set out in the prospectus or other legal documents and are urged to seek professional advice from their financial, legal, accounting and tax advisors with regard to their investment objectives, financial situation and specific needs. The tax treatment of any investment depends on your individual circumstances and may be subject to change in the future. Boreal does not provide any tax advice within this document and the investor’s individual circumstances were not taken into account when providing this document.

Investing in any security or investment strategies discussed herein may not be suitable for you, and you may want to consult a financial advisor. Nothing in this material constitutes individual investment, legal or tax advice. Investments involve risk and any investment may incur either profits or losses. The investments mentioned herein may be subject to risks that are difficult to quantify and to integrate into the valuation of investments. In general, products with a high degree of risk such as derivatives, structured products or alternative/non-traditional investments (such as hedge funds, private equity, real estate funds etc.) are suitable only for investors who are capable of understanding and assuming the risks involved. The value of any capital investment may be at risk and some or all of the original capital may be lost. The investments are exposed to currency fluctuations and may increase or decrease in value. Fluctuations in exchange rates may cause increases or decreases in your returns and/or in the value of the portfolio. The investments may be exposed to currency risks because a financial instrument or the underlying investment of a financial instrument is dominated in a currency different from the reference currency from the portfolio or other than the one of the investor’s country of residence.

This document may refer to the past performance of financial instruments. Past performance does not guarantee future results. The value of financial instruments may fall or rise. All statements in this document other than statements of past performances and historical facts are “forward-looking statements” which do not guarantee the future performance. Financial projections included in this document do not represent forecasts or budgets but are purely illustrative examples based on series of current expectations and assumptions which may not eventuate. The actual performance, results, market value and prospects of a financial instrument may differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements in this document. Boreal disclaims any obligation to update any forward-looking statement as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. The information contained in this document is neither the result of financial analysis within the meaning of the Swiss Banking Association “Directive on the Independence of Financial Research” nor of independent investment research as per EU regulation on MiFID provisions.

Unless otherwise stated, the portfolios and its performances herein do not account for costs, fees, commissions, expenses charged on issuance and redemption of securities or other, nor any taxes that may be levied and / or charges, have no track record and have not been independently audited. Boreal shall accept no liability for any loss arising from the use of this material, nor shall Boreal treat any recipient of this material as a customer or client simply by virtue of its receipt. The information herein is not intended for any person residing in any jurisdiction in which it is unlawful to distribute this material.

This document is confidential and is intended only for the use of the person to whom it was delivered. This document may not be reproduced in whole or in part or delivered to any other person without the prior written approval of Boreal.