









# Investing in a lifecycle

Worldwide stock markets posted a volatile third quarter, driven by trade tariff uncertainty and strong corporate earnings. In the US, equities rose to record highs on the back of solid bottom-line company result and expectations the Federal Reserve would lower interest rates. Concerns about high valuations also triggered declines during the quarter.

Europe and Asia offered a mixed picture. While industries such as defense and mining benefited from geopolitical developments, consumer product and industrial stocks lagged. The 'Magnificent 7' technology equities performed strongly again, with the communications sector leading the rally.

Global bond markets also had a volatile quarter. Mixed economic news and central bank monetary policy resulted in fluctuating government bond yields. Corporate bonds, particularly in the US, were popular. Companies raised significant capital for technology investments. High-yield bonds and emerging market debt performed well.

The threat of new US import tariffs and the stalled progress of major trade agreements are creating continued uncertainty. The US's status as a "safe haven" was challenged by the Trump administration's unpredictable policies and rising national debt.

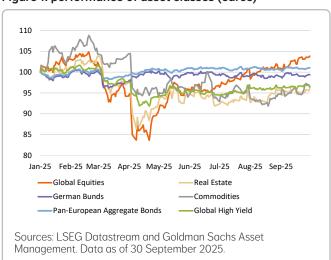
If you want to find out more about the lifecycles' returns and further developments, then please continue reading this magazine.



Risky assets had a strong third quarter despite signs of a weakening US labor market, with equities performing particularly well. Investor sentiment was boosted by declining trade uncertainty and moderate inflation figures. US bond yields fell slightly, while eurozone government bonds, fueled in part by political unrest in France, posted small negative returns. Despite the Federal Reserve's (Fed) rate cut in September, the dollar stabilized against the euro.

US unemployment rose only modestly in August in spite of significantly slowing job growth. Inflation also increased slightly. Moderate inflation and mounting job worries led the central bank to resume its cycle of rate cuts, lowering its policy rate by 25 basis points. The Fed further hinted at more rate cuts. The US economy experienced a strong recovery and returned to growth in the second quarter. Growth was driven by increased private consumption and business investment. Imports declined sharply, with net exports contributing positively as well.

Figure 1: performance of asset classes (euros)



In the eurozone, economic growth slowed in the second quarter, partly attributed to weaker export figures. With tentative signs of economic recovery, inflation around 2%, and a tight labor market in mind, the European Central Bank (ECB) kept its policy rates unchanged. France experienced considerable political unrest, with the Bayrou government falling after just nine months. Concerns about the sustainability of French government debt remained a key theme for financial markets in the third quarter. The euro strengthened by 0.1% against the dollar.

The Chinese economy was characterized last quarter by weak domestic demand and strong export performance. In response to the bleak growth outlook and persistent deflationary pressure, the central bank eased its monetary policy in August. In Japan, the central bank kept its policy rate unchanged but indicated it could not rule out rate hikes.

Global equities gained significantly, with the MSCI AC World NR index closing higher by 7.5% in euro terms. Emerging markets outperformed, rising by over 10%, with strong contributions from China, Taiwan, and Korea. Japanese and US equities gained 7.9% in euro terms, while European equities added 3.5%.

At the industry level, the IT and telecommunications services sectors performed particularly strongly. New signals that investments in artificial intelligence are continuing fueled the gains. The non-cyclical consumer goods sector declined, showing the weakest performance. Listed real estate and healthcare also lagged behind, posting smaller gains.

In bond markets, US 10-year Treasury yields peaked at 4.5% in mid-July, to end the quarter at 4.1%. Downward revisions to employment figures, lower-than-expected inflation figures, and the Fed's rate cut accounted for the drop. Elsewhere, bond yields rose slightly. German 10-year



yields gained 7 basis points, while French 10-year yields added 19 basis points. European investment grade and high-yield corporate bonds outperformed government bonds, yielding 0.9% and 1.8%, respectively.

Sources: MSCI, Bloomberg, and Refinitiv Eikon. Data as of end of September 2025.



## Fixed pension benefit

## More cautious+

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	4.7	3.2	7.5	11.1	8.6
55 years	2.3	-2.8	0.9	6.7	1.5
65 years	-0.2	-3.6	-2.0	3.3	-4.2
67 years	-0.6	-3.2	-2.0	2.6	-4.9

### More cautious

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	4.9	3.3	7.7	11.5	9.1
55 years	3.7	1.3	5.1	9.2	5.3
65 years	0.5	-3.4	-1.2	4.5	-3.0
67 years	0.0	-3.1	-1.4	3.7	-3.9

## Balanced

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.2	3.3	7.9	11.9	9.7
55 years	5.2	3.3	7.9	11.9	9.6
65 years	1.0	-2.9	-0.3	5.4	-1.9
67 years	0.4	-2.9	-0.9	4.3	-3.4

### More ambitious

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
55 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
65 years	1.2	-2.8	-0.1	5.7	-1.5
67 years	0.5	-2.8	-0.8	4.5	-3.2

### More ambitious+

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
55 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
65 years	1.6	-2.4	0.4	6.3	-0.7
67 years	0.6	-2.8	-0.6	4.7	-3.0

The strategic weightings of these lifecycles can be found on www.nn.nl



## Net return by age group

## Variable pension benefit reduced risk to 15%

## More cautious - reduced risk to 15%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	4.9	3.3	7.7	11.5	9.1
55 years	3.9	1.9	5.8	9.7	6.1
65 years	1.0	-3.2	-0.6	5.3	-2.2
67 years	0.6	-2.8	-0.7	4.7	-3.0

### Balanced - reduced risk to 15%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.2	3.3	7.9	11.9	9.7
55 years	5.2	3.3	7.9	11.9	9.6
65 years	1.3	-2.8	-0.1	5.7	-1.4
67 years	0.7	-2.8	-0.6	4.9	-2.9

## More ambitious - reduced risk to 15%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
55 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
65 years	1.5	-2.7	0.1	5.9	-1.1
67 years	0.8	-2.8	-0.6	4.9	-2.8

### More ambitious+ - reduced risk to 15%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
55 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
65 years	1.8	-2.4	0.6	6.4	-0.3
67 years	0.8	-2.8	-0.5	5.1	-2.7



## Variable pension benefit reduced risk to 30%

### Balanced - reduced risk to 30%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.2	3.3	7.9	11.9	9.7
55 years	5.2	3.3	7.9	11.9	9.6
65 years	2.1	-2.0	1.1	6.2	0.1
67 years	1.6	-2.6	0.2	5.7	-1.4

### More ambitious - reduced risk to 30%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
55 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
65 years	2.3	-2.0	1.2	6.4	0.4
67 years	1.7	-2.6	0.3	5.7	-1.3

### More ambitious+ - reduced risk to 30%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
55 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
65 years	2.5	-2.1	1.3	6.8	1.0
67 years	1.7	-2.6	0.3	5.8	-1.2

## Variable pension benefit reduced risk to 45%

#### More ambitious - reduced risk to 45%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
55 years	5.4	3.4	8.2	12.3	10.2
65 years	2.6	-2.7	0.8	6.9	1.3
67 years	2.1	-2.8	0.3	6.4	-0.1

### More ambitious+ - reduced risk to 45%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
55 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
65 years	2.9	-2.4	1.2	7.2	1.8
67 years	2.2	-2.8	0.3	6.5	0.0

## Variable pension benefit reduced risk to 60%

### More ambitious+ - reduced risk to 60%

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
47 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
55 years	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8
65 years	3.3	-2.5	1.5	7.9	2.8
67 years	2.8	-2.9	0.7	7.2	1.3



At Goldman Sachs Asset Management, the asset manager of the lifecycle funds, we are committed to helping investors manage the risks and opportunities created by the transition to a more sustainable economy. Over the past two years, the focus of our stewardship work related to biodiversity and nature included deforestation.

Biodiversity loss from deforestation can present a material investment risk. This risk manifests either directly from a company's operations or across its supply chain, with potential impact to shareholder value.

We believe that engaging with companies in sectors where deforestation presents a material risk, and who have not publicly disclosed information relating to these risks, is a pragmatic first step for engagement. The Accountability Framework initiative outlines examples of best practices for companies operating in forest-risk supply chains and highlights the steps needed and key information which companies in forest risk supply chains should report.

For example, companies may undertake a comprehensive risk assessment, detail targets and strategies to mitigate deforestation risk, report on progress, and set supplier or

other codes of conduct, sourcing policies or other key procedure documents.

The Global Stewardship Team and Sustainable Investing Platform team collaborated to develop an internal assessment tool to assess the risk exposure and management of deforestation for public companies. This proprietary approach assesses direct deforestation exposure through product revenues as well as indirect exposure through sourcing activities. We also reference multiple risk indicators from third-party data providers to enhance the screening and detect companies with the highest deforestation risk.

We identified 20 companies that do not yet have a zero-deforestation target in place by utilizing natural language processing to screen all public disclosures related to deforestation policy. This approach supplements our diligence by capturing the latest material disclosures.

## Case Study: portfolio consumer staples company from Poland

In 2024, members of the Global Stewardship Team engaged with members of the Investor Relations team of a

Polish consumer staples company. We had identified the company for engagement under our Biodiversity and Nature - Deforestation engagement initiative in which we seek to engage with companies on their approaches to key risks and opportunities related to deforestation.

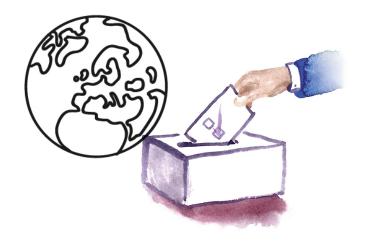
We asked about the company's plans for setting goals to eliminate deforestation risk within its supply chain. Its suppliers are primarily large brands that already have deforestation plans in place. The company said it was assessing its use of packaging and how this could increase its exposure to deforestation risks via the use of cardboard.

We shared our views with the company on publishing more information about deforestation in its supply chain as well as an overarching policy on managing biodiversity and nature risks.

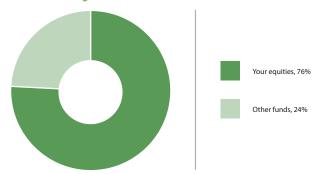
We will seek to continue engaging with the company on this topic.

## In practice

In our quarterly review, we added 45 companies to the eligible ESG investment universe and excluded 51 firms. The total number of eligible securities in the investment universe is now 954, which is approximately 28% below the total number of securities in the benchmark. Not all stocks added to the investment universe were included in the actual portfolio. As part of the portfolio optimization, we aim for a risk profile that is line with the benchmark. Ultimately, 27 new equities were added to the portfolio. For companies that were moved to the "excluded" list, most of them were not eligible for the investment universe due to governance risk and emissions screens.



## Your lifecycle breakdown - Index-tracking



## Did you know...

that your participants up to the age of 56 with a neutral/balanced profile invest more than 76% in equities to which our sustainable investment policy applies?

## Sustainable investing

NN's investments are becoming increasingly sustainable. This is reflected, for example, in equities, which represent a large proportion of pension investments. To give an idea of the sustainability of equity investments, we have expressed this in the ESG score, the carbon footprint and the hazardous waste generation for the standard investment form. The higher the ESG score and the lower the CO2 emissions and hazardous waste generation, the higher the degree of sustainability.

Sustainability performance of your equities

### **ESG** rating

Here you can see the MSCI ESG rating, which provides insight into the sustainability of the equity investments within your portfolio compared to the benchmark. MSCI is an international financial services company known for compiling indices such as the MSCI World Index. MSCI also assesses the sustainability of companies using ESG ratings. ESG stands for Environmental, Social, and Governance.

#### **ESG** rating

Benchmark

Your equities

Difference in rating



The portfolio invests on average in companies with average control measures against ESG risks.

69.84% lower CO2 emissions\* than the benchmark

#### **CO2**

Here you can see the carbon footprint (Scope 1 & 2) of the equity investments within your portfolio, compared to the benchmark. The lower the emissions, the more sustainable the company.

#### CO<sub>2</sub>

602 43 tons

 $\frac{13}{12}$  tons

30 tons

Benchmark Your equities Difference in CO2

Your carbon footprint

x 6 ground the world 🔟 x 2 households

#### Hazardous waste

Here you can see the amount of hazardous waste generated by the equity investments within your portfolio, compared to the benchmark. Hazardous waste includes chemical, radioactive, biological, electronic, medical, and industrial waste that is harmful to humans and the environment and requires special treatment. The lower the waste generation, the more sustainable the company.

#### Hazardous waste

2.89 ton

2.34 ton

Benchmark Your equities Difference in waste

\* Per EUR 1 million invested.

#### Your hazardous waste footprint

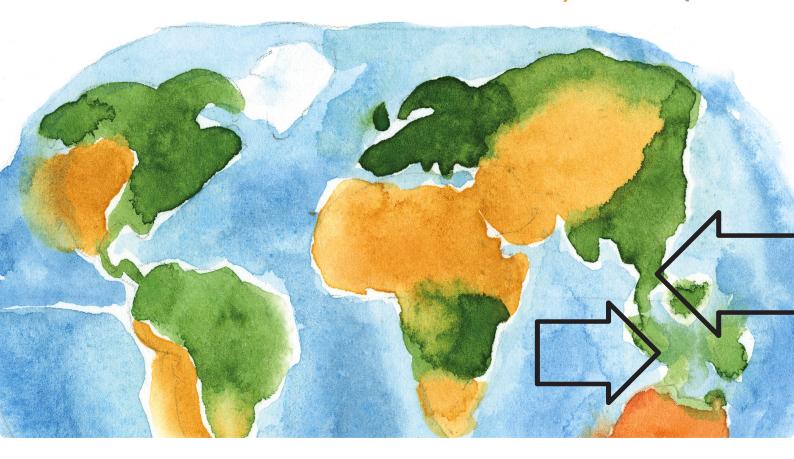
Equivalent to the CO2 emissions of\*

80.90% less hazardous waste production than

Equivalent to the hazardous waste production of\*

🔯 x 15 hazardous waste bins

This comparison is for illustrative purposes only. The hazardous waste density can vary considerably. For this comparison, we assumed an average density of 1,400 kg/m³ and a 220-liter waste bin.



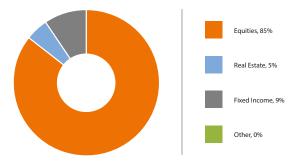
## **Index Mix Fund (NL)**

The fund's third-quarter positive performance was driven primarily by equities, which have a relatively large 85% strategic weighting within the total portfolio. Emerging markets also delivered strong returns. Fixed-income securities contributed positively to total returns as well, though their limited weighting resulted in a lower overall contribution.

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	,
Index Mix Fund (NL)	5.7	3.4	8.4	12.7	10.8

Statistics	
ISIN code	NL0013089022
Inception date	January 2019
Ongoing charges	0.15%

#### **Positioning**



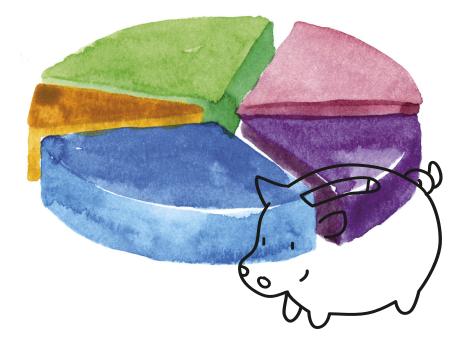
Source: Goldman Sachs Asset Management, all figures are as of 30/09/2025.

## **Performance**

## Index Mix Fund - I

Return (%) (net)			
Equities	3 months	year to date	weight
Enhanced Index Global Equity Fund (NL)	5.4	2.8	67.1
MSCI World Net TR Index	7.2	3.5	
Enhanced Index Global Small Caps Equity Fund (NL)	8.1	2.3	5.1
MSCI World Small Cap Index (NR) EUR	8.4	2.7	
Enhanced Index Emerging Markets Equity Fund I (NL)*	10.0	13.4	13.0
MSCI Emerging Markets (NR)	10.5	12.4	
Real Estate			
Northern Trust Real Estate Climate Index FGR Fund I EUR	4.8	-1.8	5.0
Solactive Developed Real Estate ESG Climate Index NTR	4.6	-2.4	
Fixed Income			
Northern Trust EMD Fund	1.5	-0.1	4.9
BBG Barclays EM LC Government 10% Country Cap index	1.6	0.3	
Global High Yield Bond Fund (NL)*	2.1	-2.3	4.4
Bloomberg Barclays 70% US 30% Pan-European ex Fin Subord 2% Issuer Capped High Yield EUR (unhedged)	2.3	-2.7	

<sup>\*</sup> Added in December 2024. Source: Goldman Sachs Asset Management, all figures are as of 30/09/2025.





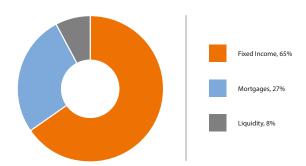
## **Hybrid Index Fund**

The Hybrid Index Fund achieved positive returns in the quarter. All underlying asset classes made a positive contribution. Sustainable corporate bonds, green bonds, and social bonds outperformed their benchmarks. The mortgage portfolio also contributed positively, but slightly underperformed bonds. Corporate bonds benefited from stabilizing European interest rates and diminished recession fears.

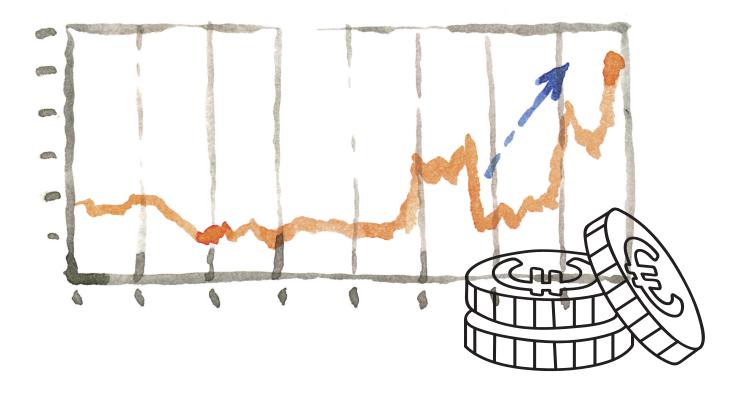
Return (%)	3	year to	1 year	3 years	5 years
(net)	months	date		(ann.)	(ann.)
Hybrid Index Fund	0.8	2.4	3.6	4.7	-0.2

Statistics	
ISIN code	NL0013995152
Inception date	November 2019
Ongoing charges	0.21%

#### **Positioning**



Source: Goldman Sachs Asset Management, all figures are as of 30/09/2025.



## **Liability Matching funds**

The four Liability Matching funds have different interest rate sensitivity profiles (Liability Matching Fund (M) (NL), Liability Matching Fund (XL) (NL) and Liability Matching Fund (XXL) (NL)). They invest in a combination of euro-denominated interest rate swaps, high-quality money market funds, high-quality government bonds and cash. The interest rate sensitivity of the funds is enhanced with interest rate swaps and bond futures.

The Liability Matching Fund (M) (NL) strives for an interest rate sensitivity of about 4 years and (L) (NL), (XL) (NL) and (XXL) (NL) of approximately 20, 40 and 42 years, respectively. The four Liability Matching funds have different interest rate profiles that are composed in such a way that, used in combination, they can offer the best possible match in the period leading up to retirement.

### What did the interest rates do?

Swap rates rose across all maturities in the third quarter. The increase was more pronounced for 30-year maturities and beyond than for medium-term maturities. The swap curve showed only limited steepening, evident primarily in July and August. Government bonds overall underperformed swaps. Austria, Ireland, and the European Union bucked the trend, registering slightly stronger performances. France was the weakest performer, with the spread on French bonds with maturities up to 30 years widening by about 17 basis points. Political uncertainty coupled with Fitch's credit rating downgrade served as primary catalysts. Spreads on Belgian, German, and Dutch debt securities increased by several basis points.

The Federal Reserve lowered interest rates in September, after leaving them unchanged for several consecutive

quarters. In line with market expectations, two more interest rate cuts are expected for the remainder of the year. The main factors are disappointing labor market data and inflation expectations. The impact of the import tariffs on US inflation appears to be limited for now.

Following a June reduction, the ECB held its key interest rate steady at 2%. This level is projected to last through year-end. The ECB will set its course based on figures on economic growth and inflation expectations. Average inflation in Europe is hovering around 2% and is expected to decline slightly. Our positions remain focused on a steeper yield curve. We will continue to closely monitor economic developments and expectations, as well as the impact of the Dutch pension system transitions on the yield curve.



## Liability Matching Fund (M) (NL) - T

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
Liability Matching Fund (M) (NL) - T	0.1	1.2	1.6	3.1	-1.1
Bloomberg Barclays Euro Treasury AAA 1-3 Yr Downgrade Maturity Tolerant, incl derivatives to increase duration (M)	0.0	1.1	1.0	2.5	-1.3

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#### **Statistics**

ISIN code	NL0013040348
Inception date	November 2018
Ongoing charges	0.15%

## Liability Matching Fund (L) (NL) - T

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
Liability Matching Fund (L) (NL) - T	-2.0	-10.1	-8.3	1.2	-10.2
Bloomberg Barclays Euro Treasury AAA 1-3 Yr Downgrade Maturity Tolerant, incl derivatives to increase duration (L)	-2.1	-10.7	-8.7	0.3	-10.6

#### Statistics

ISIN code	NL0013040355
Inception date	November 2018
Ongoing charges	0.15%

## Liability Matching Fund (XL) (NL) - T

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
Liability Matching Fund (XL) (NL) - T	-5.5	-27.6	-23.7	-7.7	-19.9
Bloomberg Barclays Euro Treasury AAA 1-3 Yr Downgrade Maturity Tolerant, incl derivatives to increase duration (XL)	-5.6	-28.6	-24.9	-8.7	-20.3

#### Statistics

ISIN code	NL0013040363
Inception date	November 2018
Ongoing charges	0.15%

## Liability Matching Fund (XXL) (NL) - T\*

Return (%) (net)	3 months	year to date	1 year	3 years (ann.)	5 years (ann.)
Liability Matching Fund (XXL) (NL) - T	-3.8	-18.7	-17.1		
Bloomberg Barclays Euro Treasury AAA 1-3 Yr Downgrade Maturity Tolerant, incl derivatives to increase duration (XXL)	-3.8	-18.1	-16.9		

### Statistics

ISIN code	NL0015001QX5
Inception date	February 2024
Ongoing charges	0.15%

Performance measurement are as of 1/3/2024. Source: Goldman Sachs Asset Management, all figures are as of 30/09/2025.

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