

# Accelerating out of the New Normal: How can SWFs win in a slow growth economy?

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# Which "New Normal" are we moving in?

## 1. Global economics

- The global economic outlook has recently improved and there is growing evidence of a broad based pickup in growth. **Is this time different?**
- Commodity prices recently stabilized after the sharp correction in 2015-16. Commodity-exporting economies adjusted their fiscal/monetary position. **Are current oil prices the new normal?**
- Economic transformation is underway, with the drivers of growth shifting towards climate change (despite Trump!), innovative and disruptive technologies and the high-tech service sector. **Are SWFs adapting?**

## 2. Global politics

- To what extent will **Trump** curb global trade, re-negotiate international agreements and weaken western defense alliances?
- Are Brexit and the Trump's victory one-off events or the beginning a global populist **anti-globalization** trend?
- Could this in particular affect the macroeconomic model of export-oriented **Emerging economies**?
- Is current optimism about European politics justified or can we expect **populism** and anti-establishment sentiment to find new vigor going forward?
- Could Trump be the ideal candidate to counter the feared consequences of Fed tightening with **expansive fiscal policy**?

## 3. Global markets

- Normalization in monetary policy appears to be closer than before. Will global markets be able to cope with this **regime change**?
- The specter of **rising interest rates** makes longer-duration fixed income investments more challenging. Fixed income returns can be negative!
- **Valuations** in key markets are stretched and complacency might have reached levels at which sudden spikes in **volatility** could be painful.
- SWFs experienced good returns over the last two decades. Are we entering a period of **low returns**?
- Are SWFs well equipped to deal with these **investment challenges**?

# Global cycle: Ten years after the financial crisis

The global situation appears to have improved over the last 4–6 months

## Global PMI Heat Map

	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17
<b>US</b>	51.3	51.5	50.8	50.7	51.3	52.9	52	51.5	53.4	54.1	54.3	55	54.2	53.3	52.8
<b>China</b>	48	49.7	49.4	49.2	48.6	50.6	50	50.1	51.2	50.9	51.9	51	51.7	51.2	
<b>Eurozone</b>	51.2	51.6	51.7	51.5	52.8	52	51.7	52.6	53.5	53.7	54.9	55.2	55.4	56.2	56.8
<b>Spain</b>	54.1	53.4	53.5	51.8	52.2	51	51	52.3	53.3	54.5	55.3	55.6	54.8	53.9	
<b>France</b>	50.2	49.6	48	48.4	48.3	48.6	48.3	49.7	51.8	51.7	53.5	53.6	52.2	53.3	55.1
<b>Italy</b>	52.2	53.5	53.9	52.4	53.5	51.2	49.8	51	50.9	52.2	53.2	53	55	55.7	
<b>Germany</b>	50.5	50.7	51.8	52.1	54.5	53.8	53.6	54.3	55	54.3	55.6	56.4	56.8	58.3	58.2
<b>UK</b>	50.9	51.2	49.7	50.7	52.5	48.2	53.5	55.2	54.6	53.5	56	55.4	54.5	54.2	
<b>EM</b>	48.9	50.2	49.6	49.5	49.2	50.3	50.1	50.3	51	50.7	51	50.8	51.3	51.6	
<b>Mexico</b>	53.1	53.2	52.4	53.6	51.1	50.6	50.9	51.9	51.8	51.1	50.2	50.8	50.6	51.5	
<b>India</b>	51.1	52.4	50.5	50.7	51.7	51.8	52.6	52.1	54.4	52.3	49.6	50.4	50.7	52.5	
<b>Canada</b>	49.4	51.5	52.2	52.1	51.8	51.9	51.1	50.3	51.1	51.5	51.8	53.5	54.7	55.5	
<b>Japan</b>	50.1	49.1	48.2	47.7	48.1	49.3	49.5	50.4	51.4	51.3	52.4	52.7	53.3	52.4	52.8

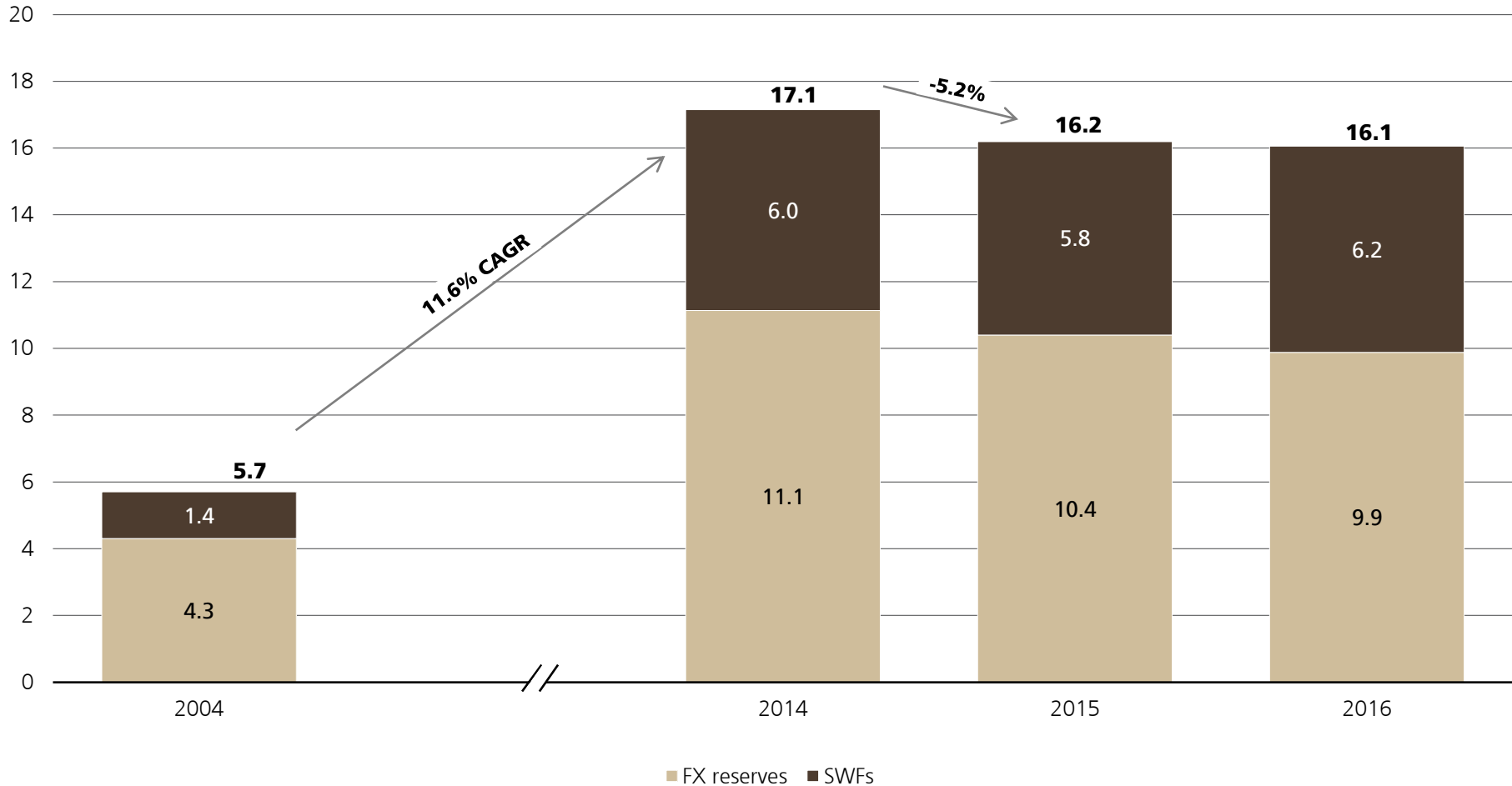


**UBS**

Source: Markit via DataStream, UBS Asset Management  
Information as of April 26, 2017

# In 2016 sovereign wealth stabilized

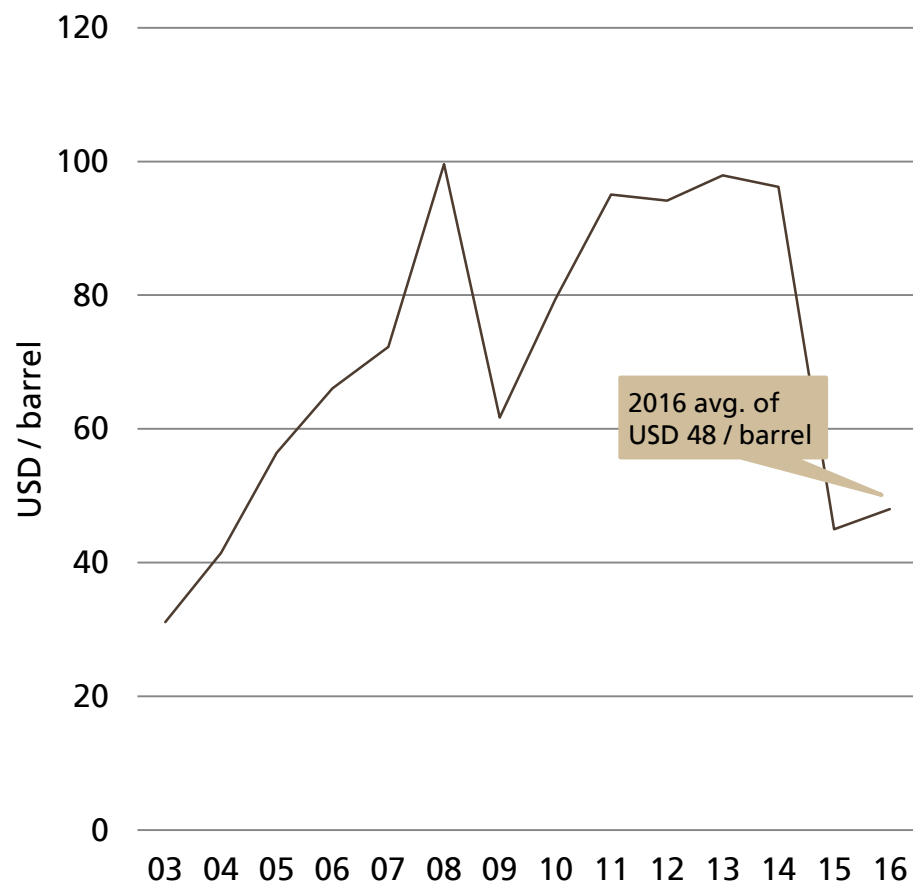
## FX reserves and SWFs, USD trillion



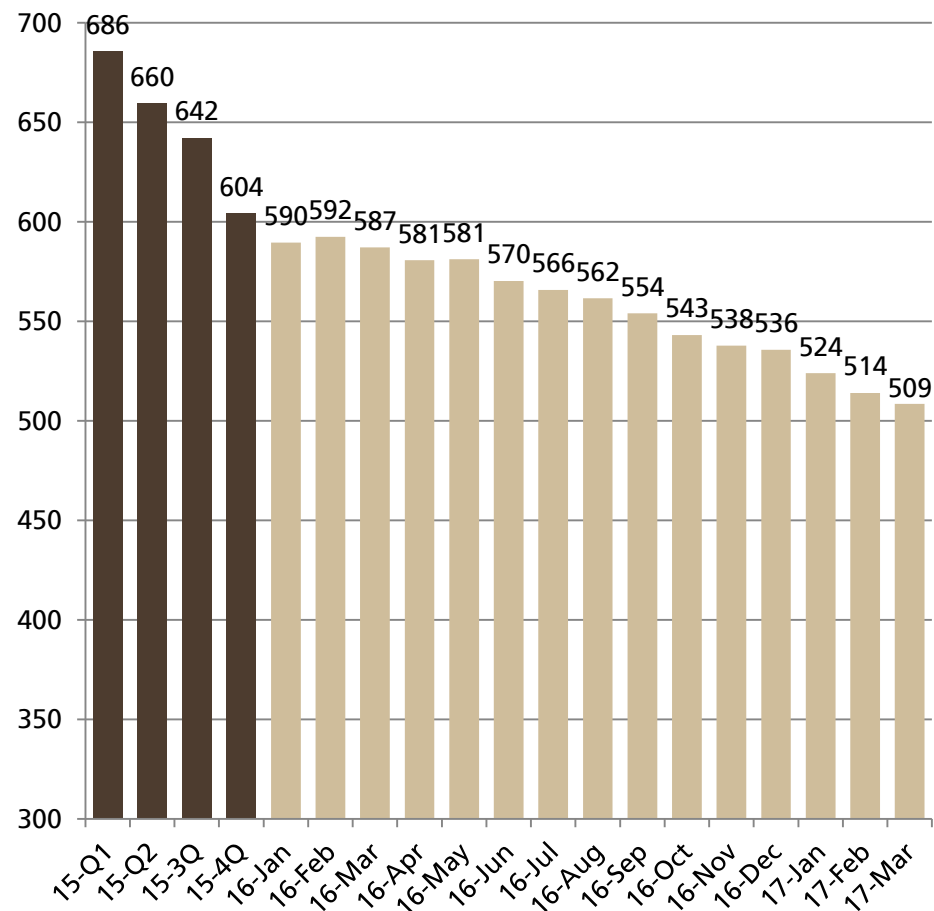
Source: World Bank and Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute. Data as of year-end 2016.  
SAMA and SAFE counted within FX reserves.

# Oil prices and Saudi FX reserves

**Oil Prices, WTI 2003 – 16 (USD/barrel)**



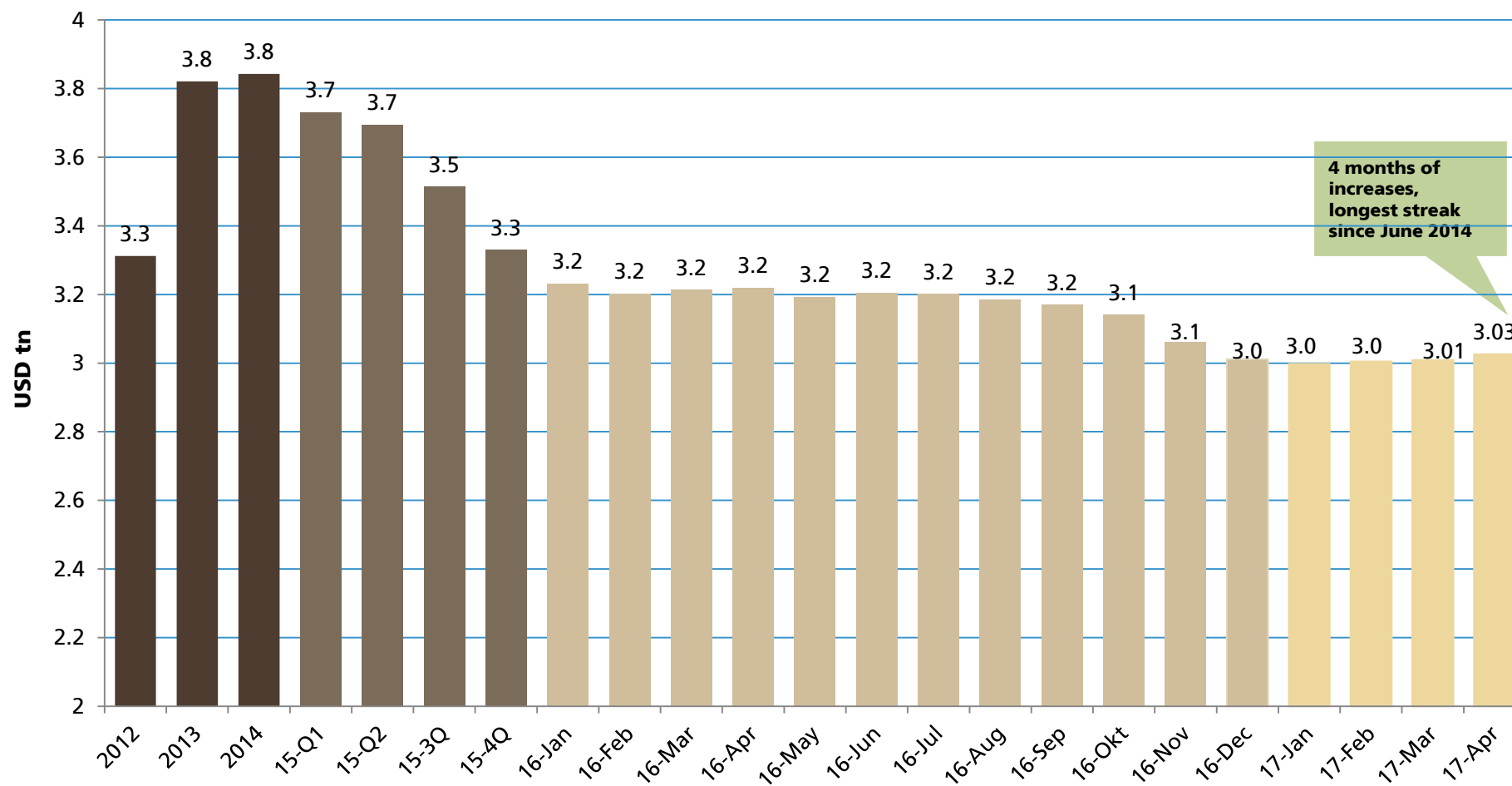
**Saudi Arabia official reserve assets (USD bn)**



Source: IMF World Economic Outlook as of April 2017, SAMA 2017.

# Chinese FX Reserves

China FX reserves (USD tn)

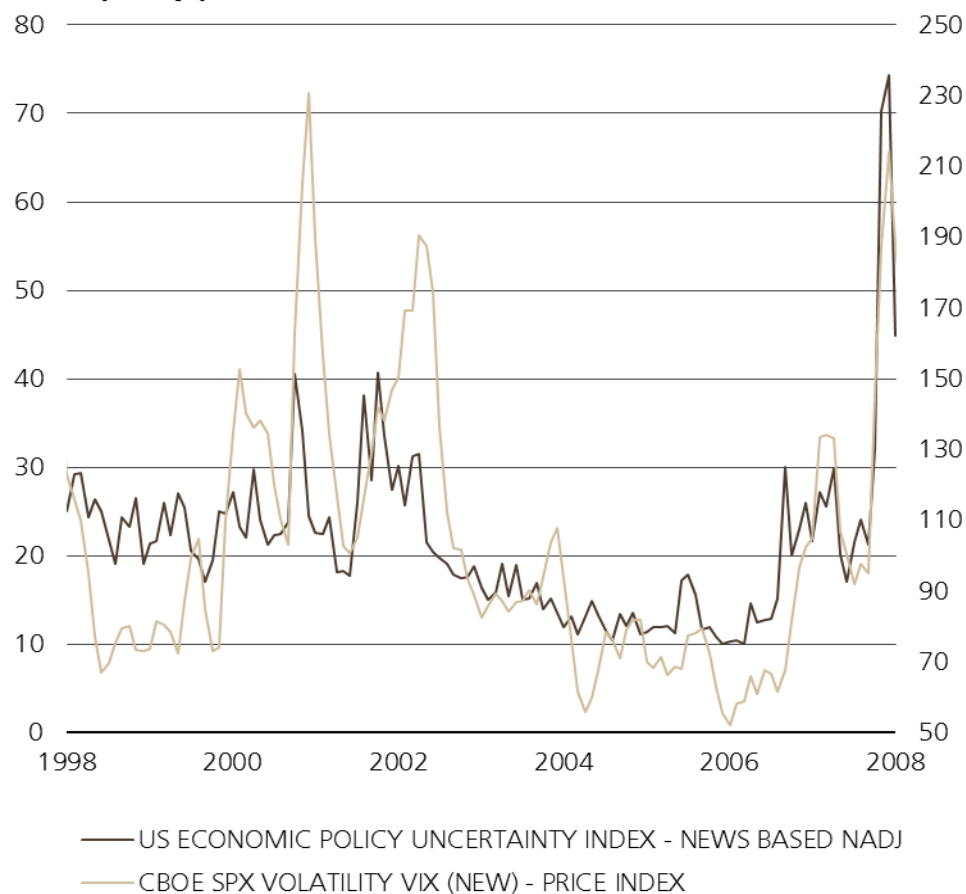


Source: SAFE May 2017

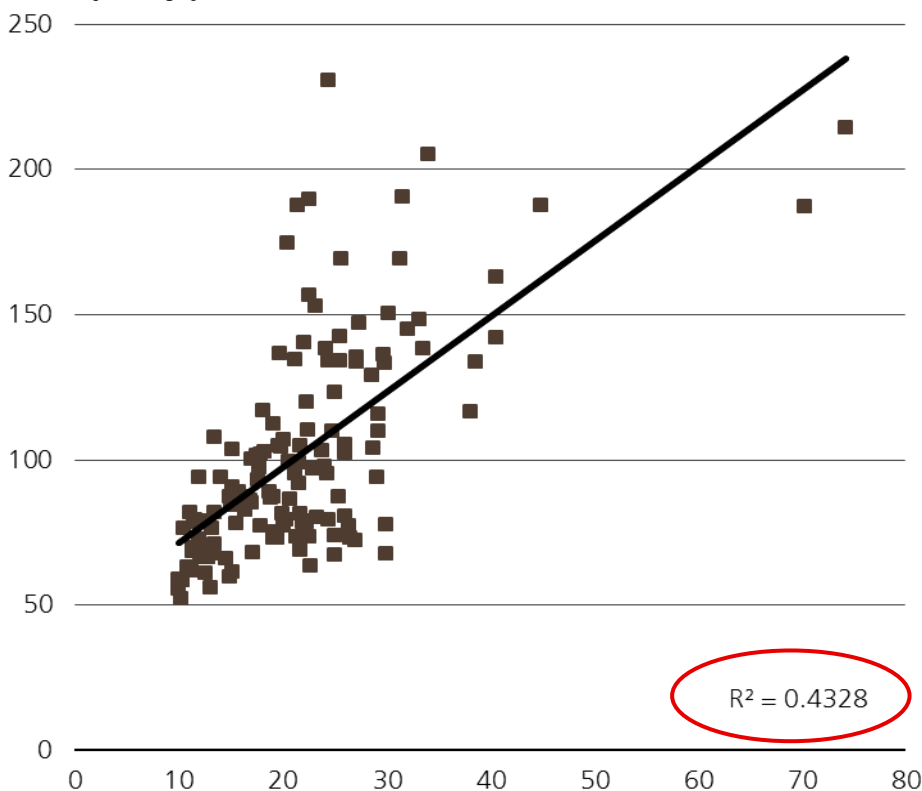
# Impact of QE on implied volatility

Relationship between policy uncertainty and implied volatility well established pre-QE...

US Economic Policy Uncertainty Index v VIX to Dec 2008 (Pre QE)



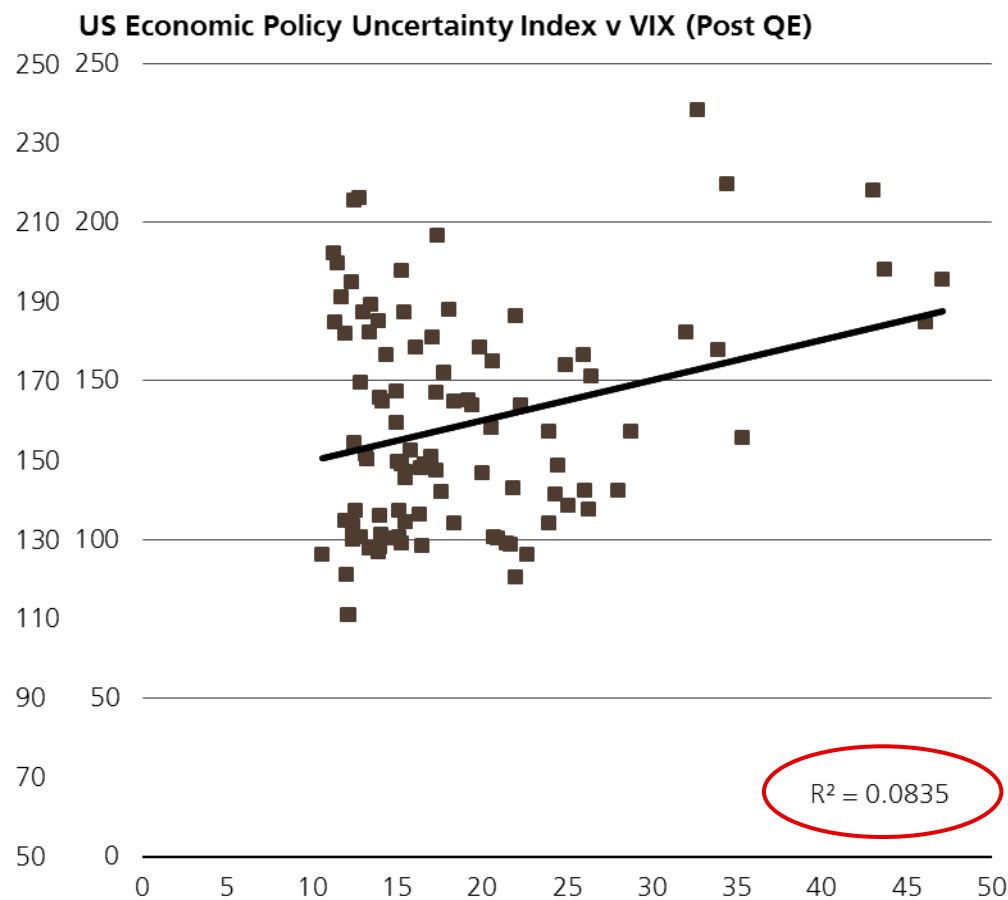
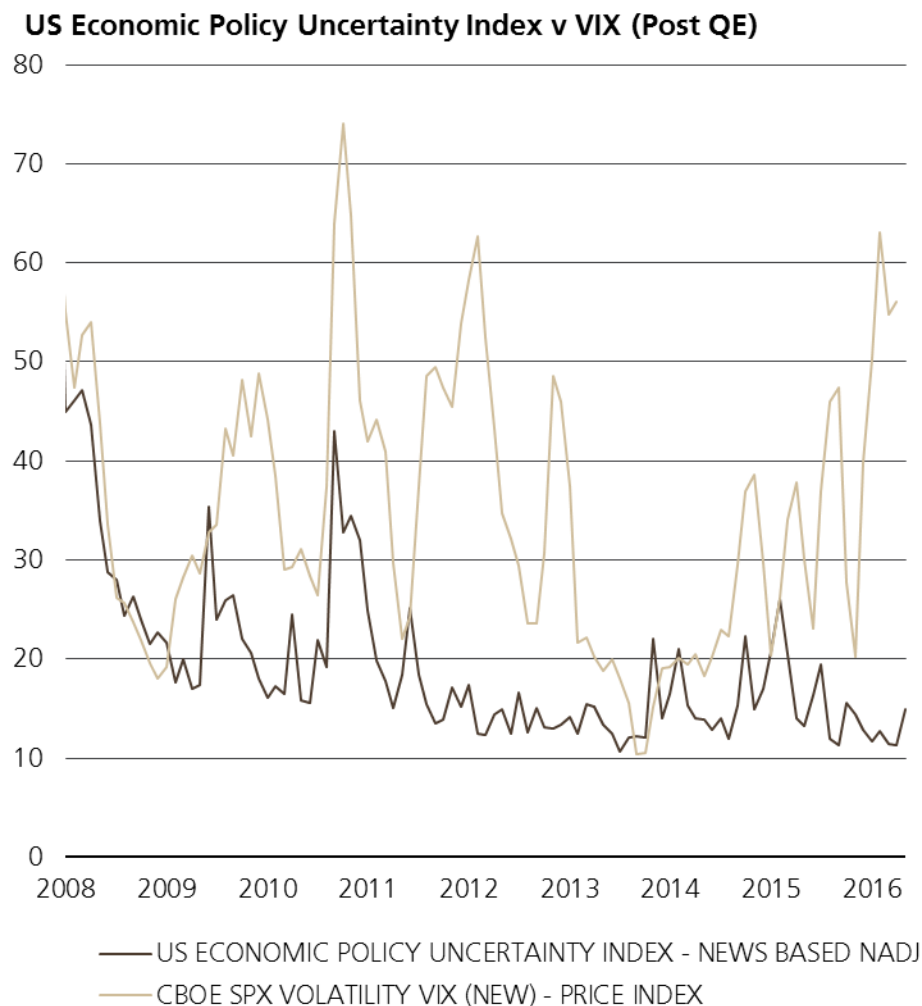
US Economic Policy Uncertainty Index v VIX to Dec 2008 (Pre QE)



<sup>1</sup>Source: DataStream, UBS Asset Management as at April 20, 2017

# Impact of QE on implied volatility

...but relationship between policy uncertainty and VIX has broken down in a QE world

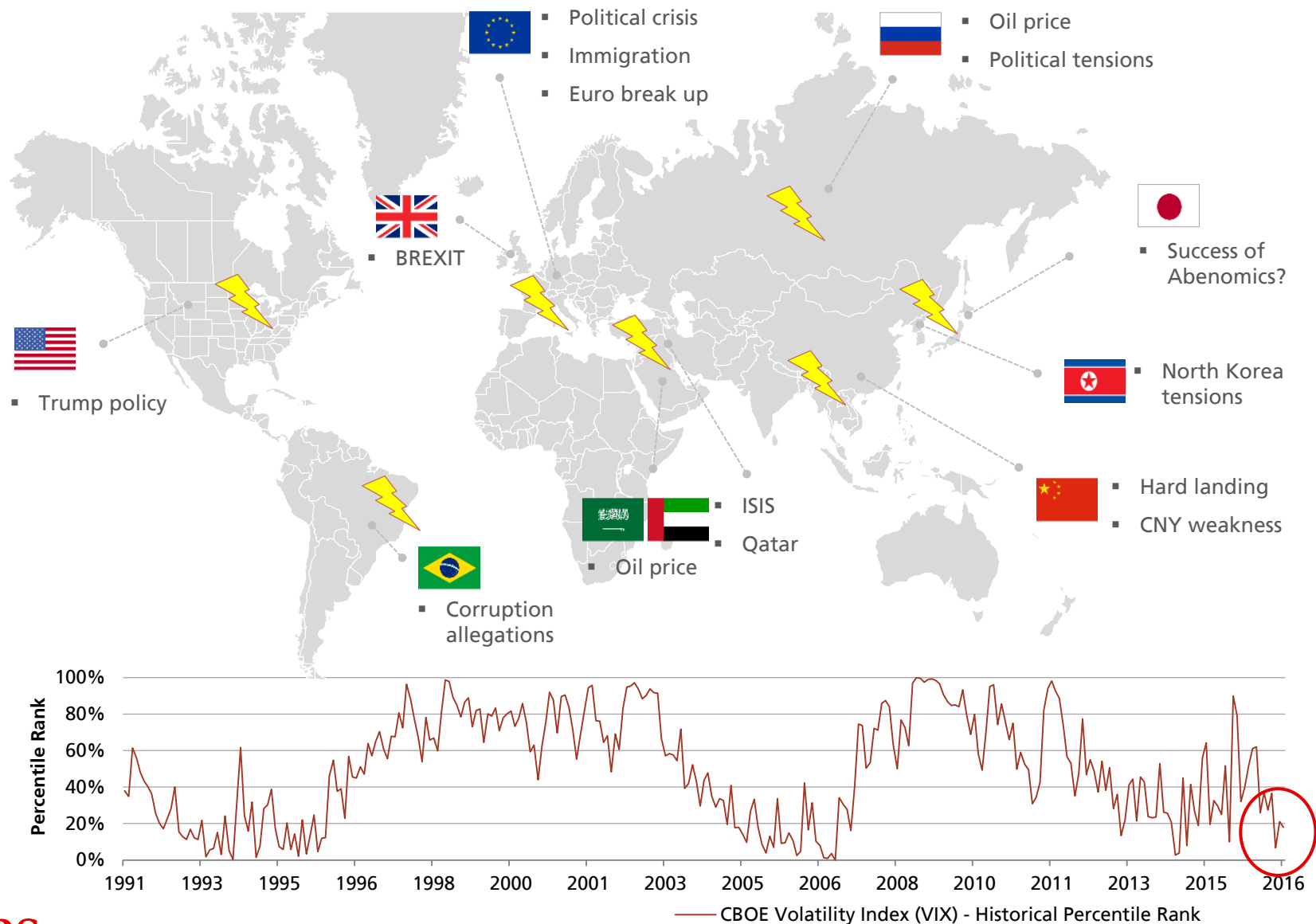


<sup>1</sup>Source: DataStream, UBS Asset Management as at April 20, 2017



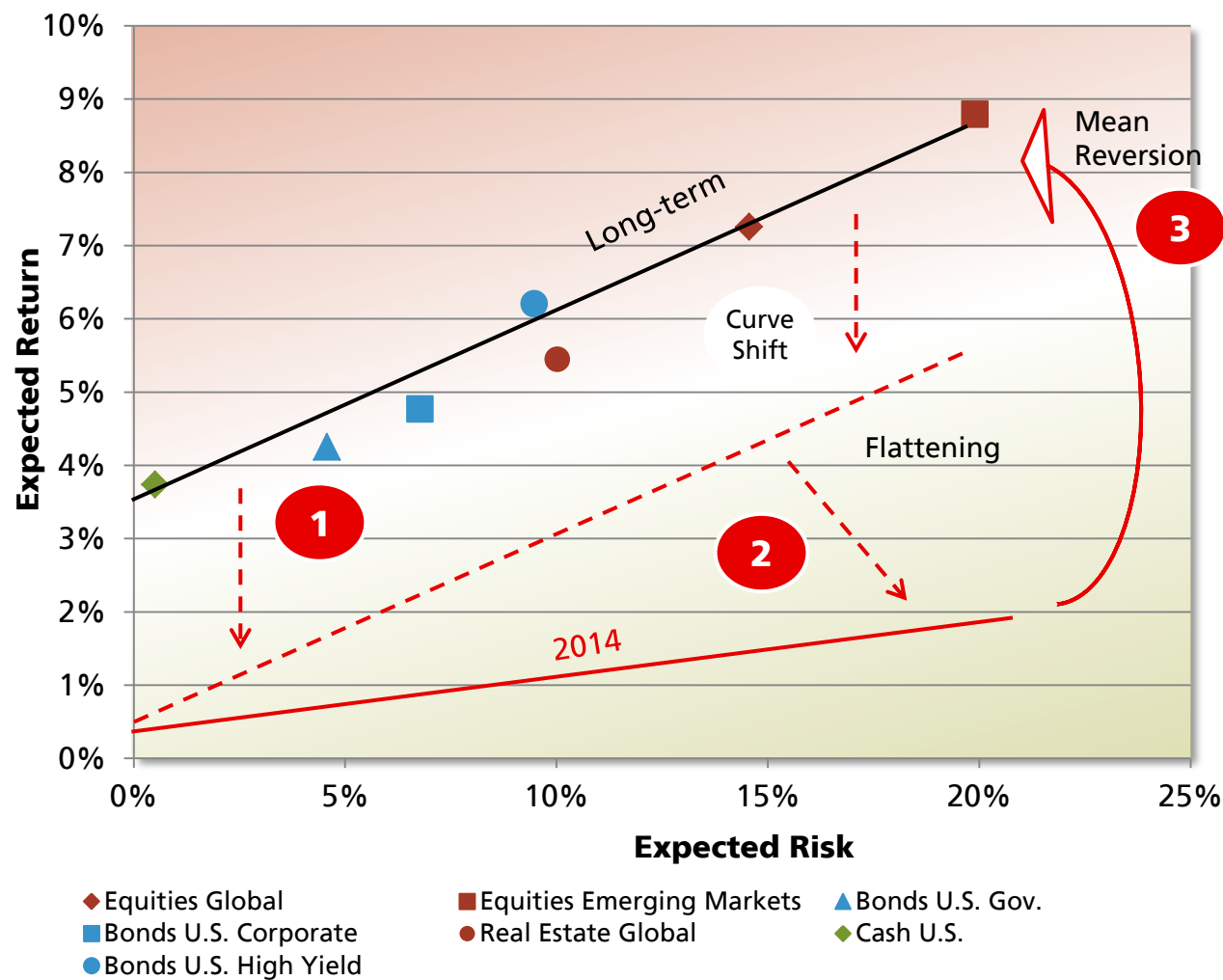
# Political outlook - Higher volatility ahead?

## No lack of political concerns



# How will normalisation happen?

The end of quantitative easing poses major risks in terms of asset class volatility



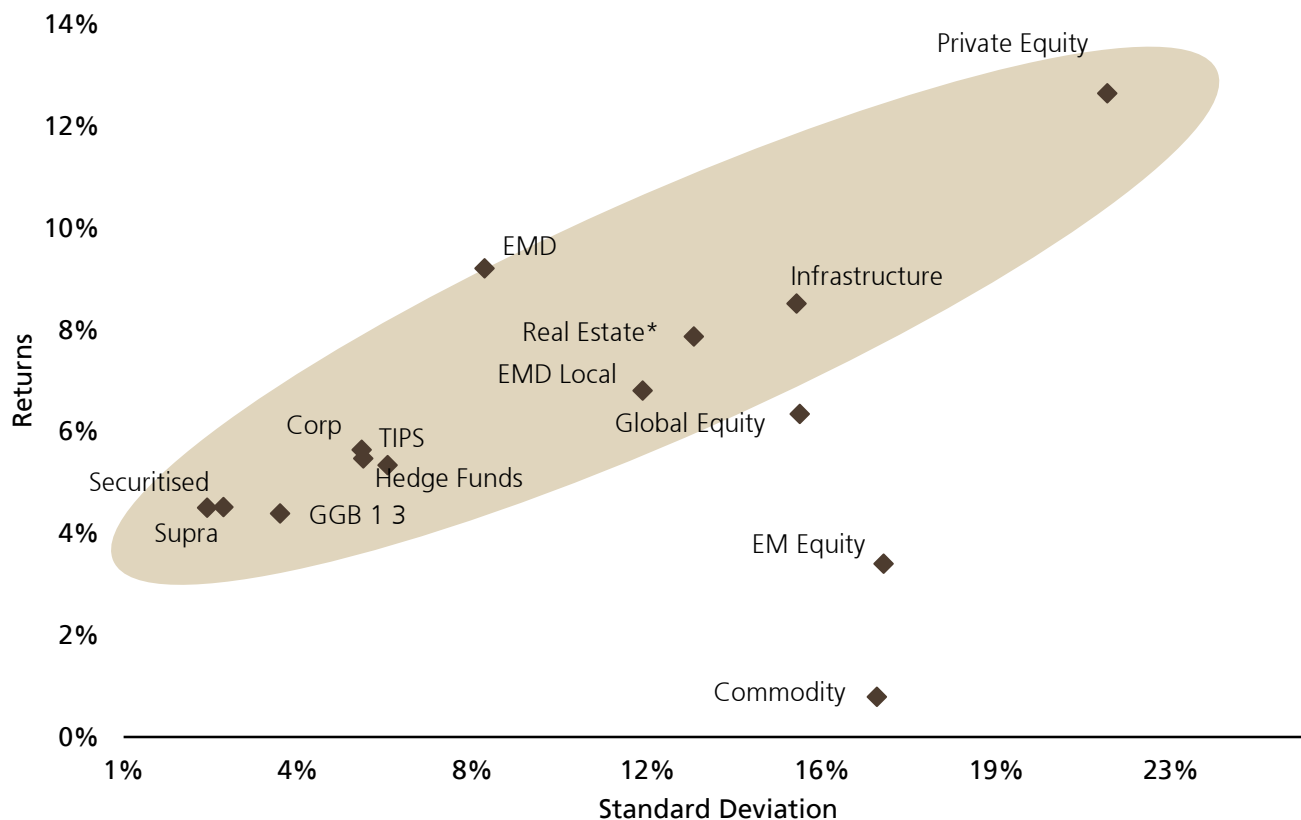
- 1) Following the financial crisis, the generally low interest rate environment led to a parallel downward shift of the risk/return curve, leading to generally lower expected returns for the same level of risk
- 2) As a consequence of QE measures, a further flattening of the risk/return curve happened, forcing investors to search for yield by investing in alternative and illiquid asset classes which are associated with high expected risk
- 3) How will the return to more "normal" financial market conditions take place? Expect more volatility as monetary policy conditions shift

The information presented reflects UBS Asset Management's expectations for prospective risk and return using current market assumptions. There is no assurance these projections will be realized.

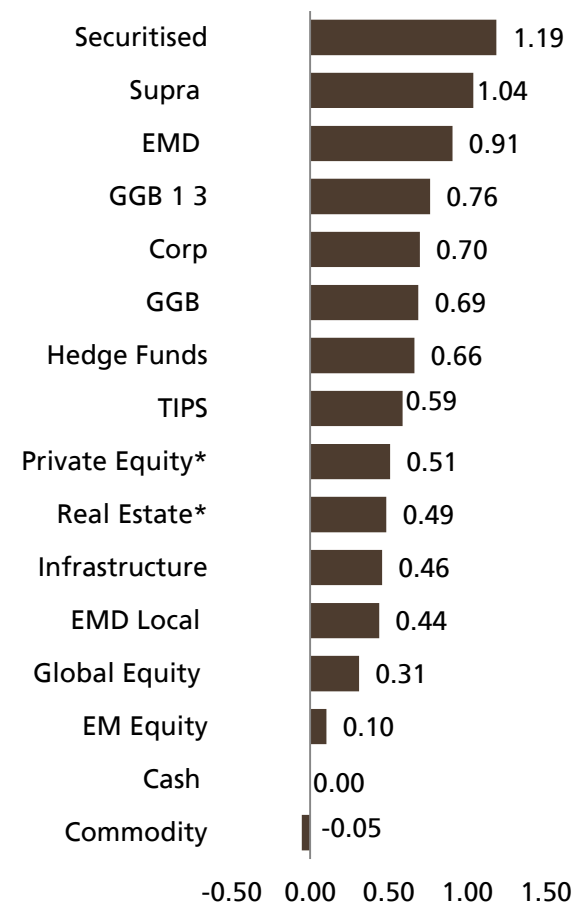
# The era of fixed income

In risk-adjusted terms, fixed income assets performed strongly over the last fifteen years

**Historical Returns and Standard Deviation, 2002 – 2017YTD**



**Sharpe Ratios, 2002 – 2017YTD**

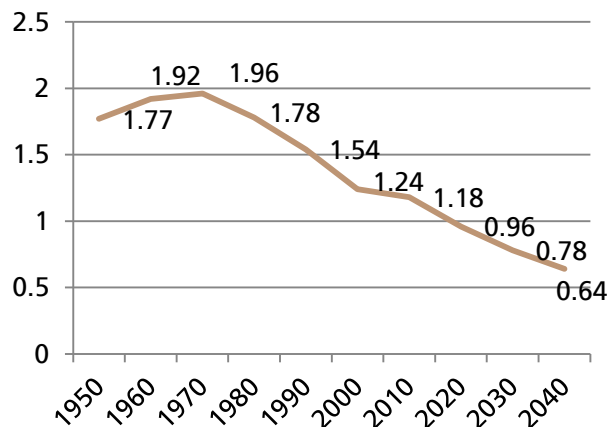


Source: UBS AM. Please note that past performance is not a guide to the future. Data as of end of May 2017.  
 \* Data for Private Equity and Real Estate for 2003 – 4Q 2016.

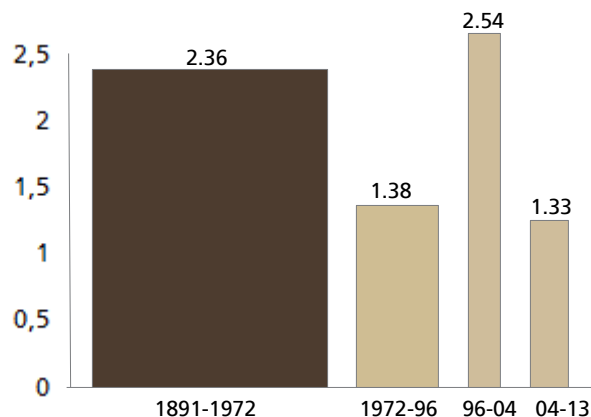
# Low growth & low return: Cyclical or structural?

The probability of the lower-for-longer scenario has fallen following Trump's election

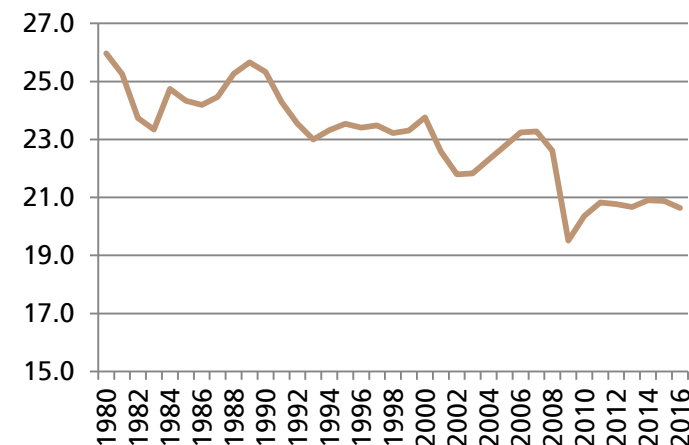
**Population growth (%)**



**Productivity growth (%)**



**Investment rate (%) Advanced econ**



## Scenario A: Normalisation (60%)

**Scenario A** assumptions:

- **Moderate rise in global rates and equity prices**
- **Inflation** (US) at constant 2%
- **US T-Bills** rising to 2.20% over next 5 years
- **US 10-year yields** rising moderately to 3.5% in five years
- **US equities** overvalued, most **non-US markets** undervalued

## Scenario B: Recession (30%)

**Scenario B** assumptions:

- **Recession followed by low growth**
- **Inflation** increasing only gradually, reaching 1.5% in five years
- **US T-Bills** declining, reaching 0.0% in five years
- **US 10-year yields** falling to 1.0% in five years
- **Global equities** initially dropping up to 30%, followed by a gradual recovery of 5% annually.

## Scenario C: Stagflation (10%)

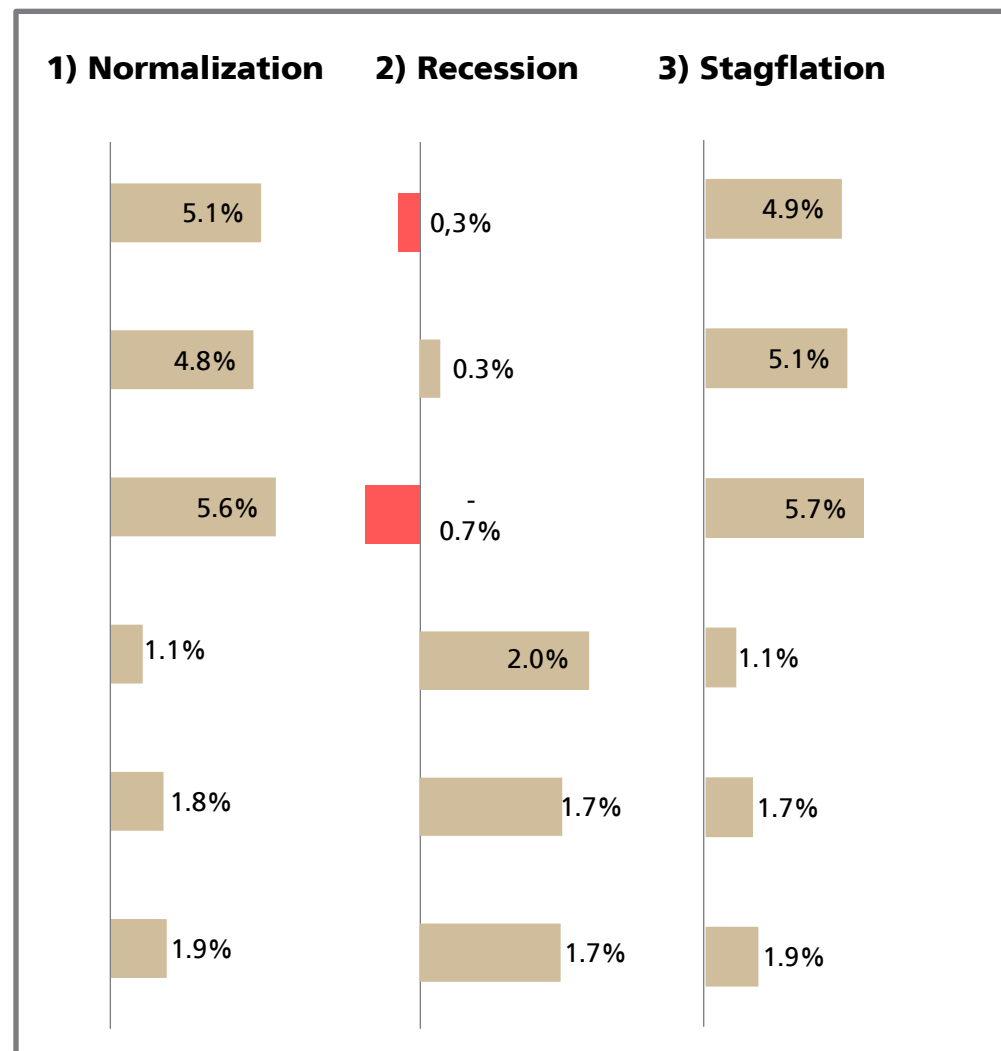
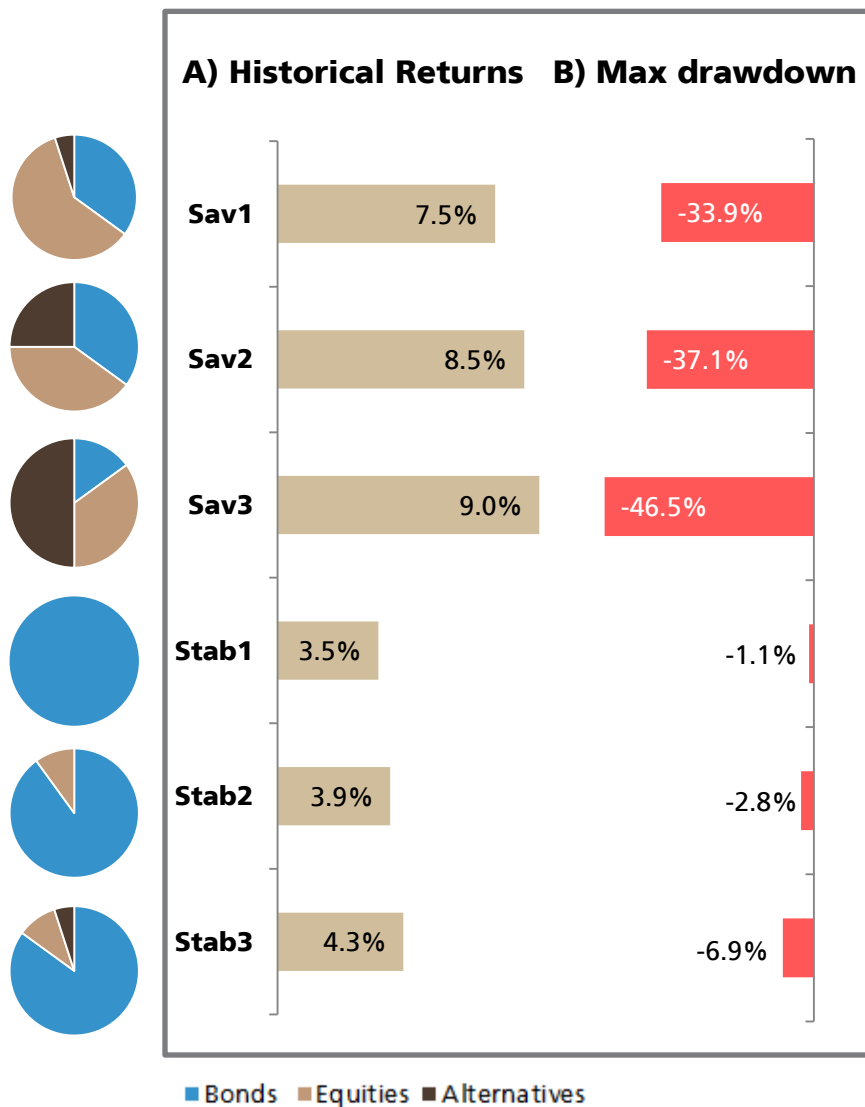
**Scenario C** assumptions:

- **Stagflation with steadily rising inflation and lackluster real returns**
- **Inflation** steadily rising, reaching 5% in five years
- **US T-Bills** reaching 3.2% in five years
- **US 10-year yields** rising to 4.5% in five years
- **Hard equity** hit in first year, lackluster real returns subsequently.

# Lower expected returns across all scenarios

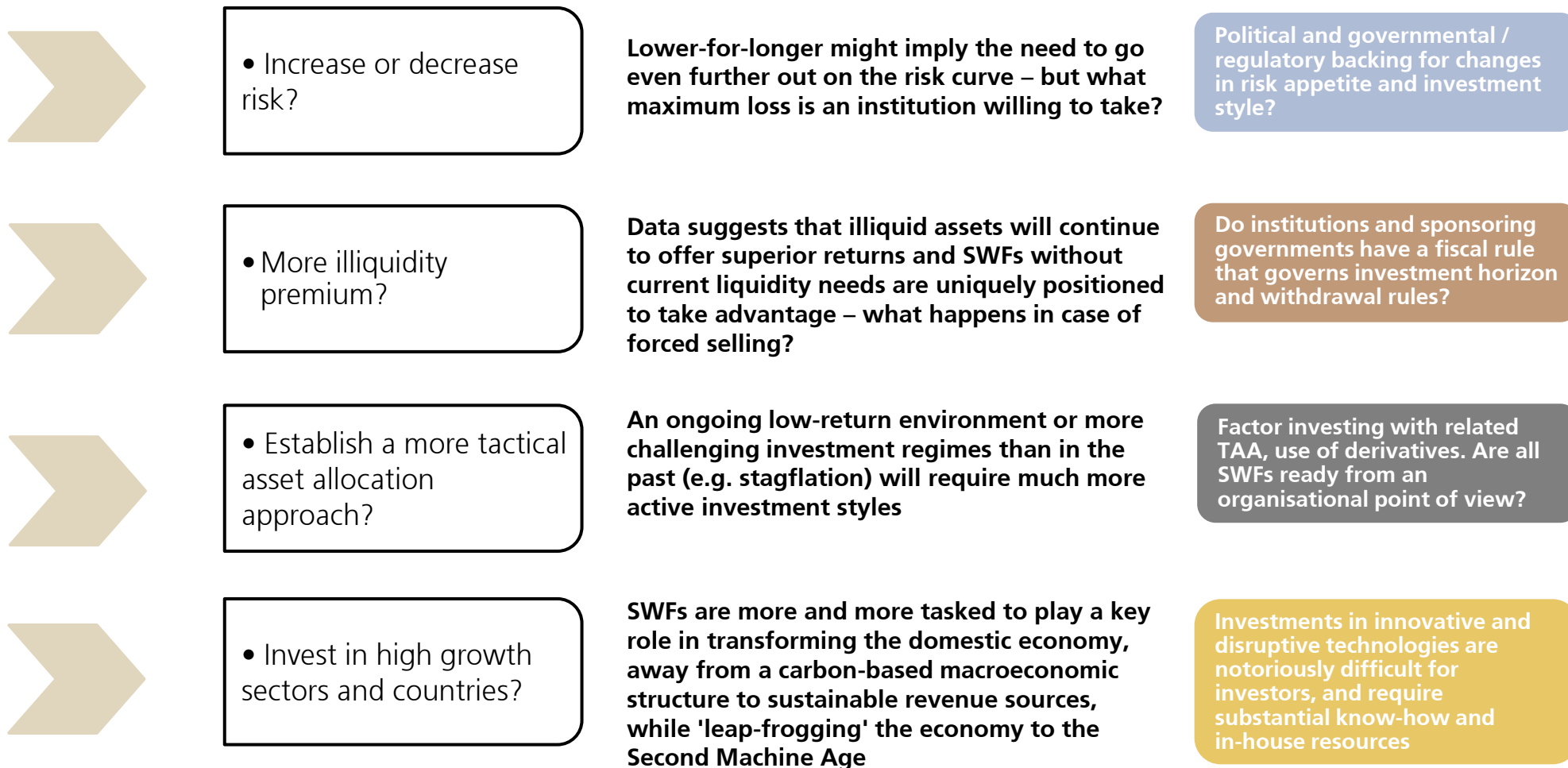
The past (2003-2017YTD)

The future (5-yr forecast)

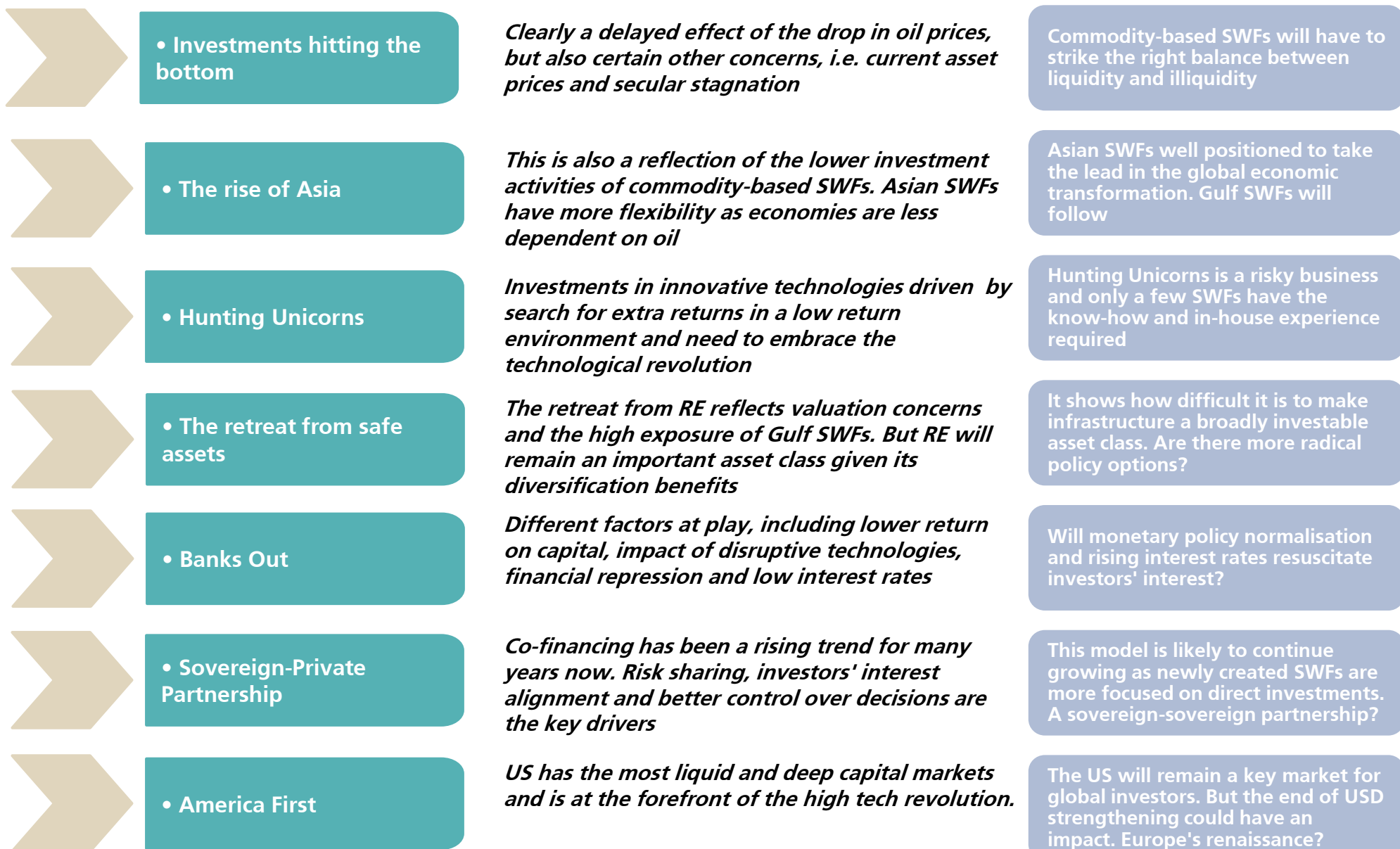


# Options to address key investment challenges

How to invest going forward – and which questions should SWFs address to meet current and future challenges



# What does the latest Bocconi report tells us?



# Contact information

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- As Head of Strategy he analyses the market trends affecting the investment behavior of central banks, sovereign wealth funds and other state-controlled investment institutions and work closely with the investment teams in providing investment advice and developing tailored investment solutions for this client segment
- Max established himself as a global thought leader on the macroeconomic, financial and political trends in sovereign wealth management. He has often been called in by leading institutions as an expert on global economic and financial matters. Max has recently published *The New Economics of Sovereign Wealth Funds* in the Wiley Finance Series, a book providing a thorough guide to sovereign wealth funds, covering the drivers of the industry, how it operates and grows, the interest from and in Western markets and the pivotal role that sovereign wealth funds play in the world economy
- In his fifteen year long international professional career, Max has been Head of governmental affairs for UBS in Europe, Middle East and Africa, Senior Economist for the Middle East region at UBS and consultant advising governments and corporates in emerging markets on behalf of international institutions
- Max holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Rome where he lectured and a Msc in Economics from the University of London.

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