



Preface



Diego López, Founder and
MD of Global SWF

The end of the calendar year is usually a time for reflection, and at Global SWF, we are no exception. As we look back, we analyze what the past 12 months have meant for Sovereign Investors. This marks the fifth annual review we publish on January 1, and it continues to become more insightful and engaging with each passing year.

The world remains in a fragile state, with enduring and arising conflicts affecting both developed and emerging markets. Yet, financial markets have shown remarkable resilience, reaching record highs. Against this backdrop, and supported by sustained high oil prices, Sovereign Wealth Funds have, for the first time in history, surpassed US\$13 trillion in assets under management (AuM), while public pension funds have reached an unprecedented US\$25 trillion in AuM. Interest in these unique global investors shows no signs of waning. At Global SWF, we are both challenged and inspired as we track and analyze the industry's ongoing developments through our various services and initiatives.

Much of this interest has converged on one region with fewer than 60 million residents: the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which we named the “Region of the Year” in our previous annual report. A myriad of international managers and bankers have not only visited the region but also established local offices over the past year, prompting us to intensify our efforts. In October, we published our first “GCC Playbook” for clients, followed by a deep dive into Abu Dhabi (the “*Capital of Capital*”), which we presented during Finance Week. In December, we made our first hire in the region, completing our small but global team – for now.

This is in addition to our continued strong presence in Southeast Asia, supported by our growing base in Singapore. We believe the GCC-Southeast Asia axis will remain a driving force for industry growth, and we are adjusting our offerings accordingly. In line with this, and after graduating 60 delegates from our SWF Academy over the past two years, we have decided to switch academic partners from London Business School (LBS) to INSEAD. We will host two new cohorts in February 2025 (Abu Dhabi) and May 2025 (Singapore).

We are also expanding our events program, emphasizing intimate and targeted gatherings rather than large, commercially driven conferences. We value our relationships with a select group of partners, and in 2024, we participated in four events organized by PERE (in Singapore, Seoul, Tokyo, and New York) and presented our GSR Scoreboard at Weil’s offices in New York. The 2025 annual report will be unveiled at events in New York (January 7, with Lazard) and Singapore (January 21, with Capital Group).

We feel privileged to hold a position of trust and access within the industry. Of the world’s 200 largest State-Owned Investors, one-fourth are clients of our data, research, or SWF Academy. Over the past five years, we have met with or interviewed senior executives from 80 of these institutions for our website. No other data provider or membership organization has our level of reach or the ability to validate analysis as we do. In 2024, we held meetings with senior executives at the headquarters of some of the world’s largest investors across New York, London, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Riyadh, Singapore, Hong Kong, Seoul, and Tokyo.

As Sovereign Investors increasingly allocate funds to Artificial Intelligence, we are convinced that AI will also transform our service offering. To this end, we are investing in new technologies and are currently developing a ChatGPT-style interface for our subscribers. This project aims to enable dynamic, highly contextual data requests, making our platform even more intuitive and valuable for users.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all our subscribers and clients for their trust, which has allowed us to grow organically and sustainably. I also want to thank our core team, interns, partners, and faculty members, whose tireless efforts keep us relevant and at the forefront of the industry.

Please enjoy our annual report and we look forward to continuing our fluid dialogue in the year ahead.

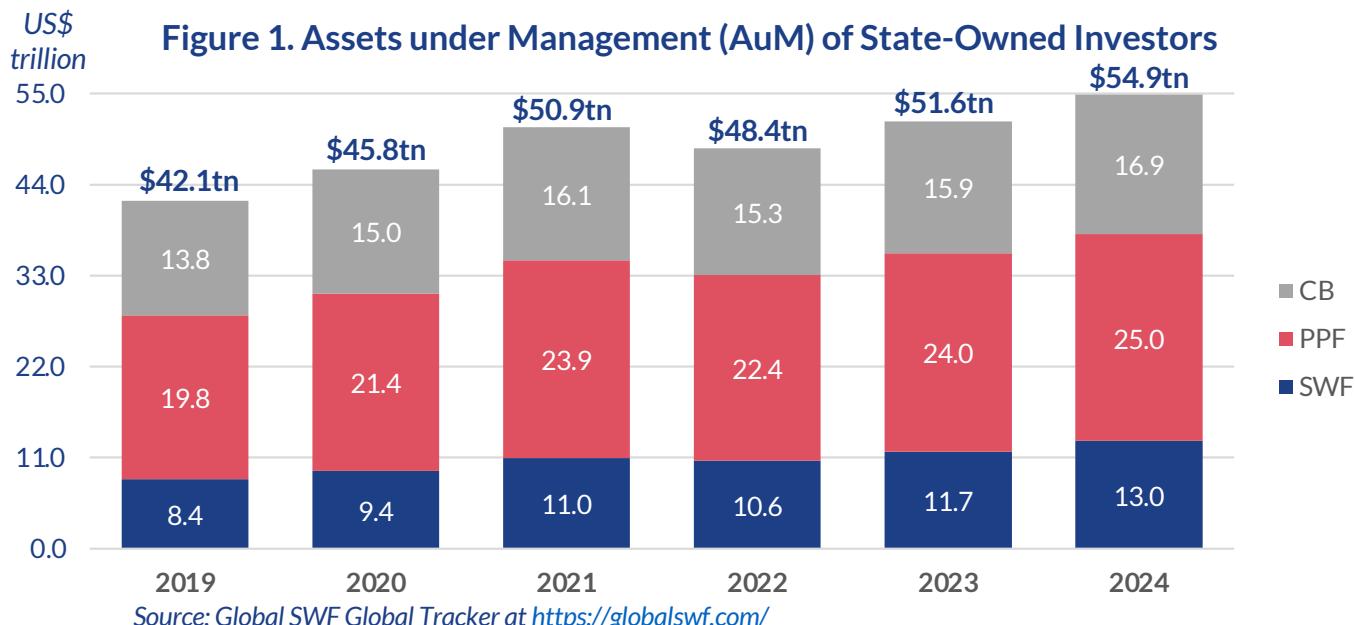
Happy 2025!



1. Executive Summary

Despite ongoing economic uncertainty and geopolitical tensions, Sovereign Investors kept *Soaring to New Heights* in 2024, driven by robust financial market performance and sustained high oil prices. Inflation remained under control, even as interest rates declined, and the IMF forecasted global GDP growth of **+3.1%** for 2024, with a potential increase to **+3.2%** in 2025. Meanwhile, climate change continues to be a critical global challenge, and AI is rapidly gaining momentum as a transformative force with far-reaching disruptive potential.

Against this backdrop, the balance sheets of State-Owned Investors (SOIs) reached a historic high, approaching US\$55 trillion. Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs) hit the significant milestone of US\$ 13.0 trillion, Public Pension Funds (PPFs) expanded their assets to US\$ 25.0 trillion, and Central Banks (CBs) grew their foreign reserves by 6%, totaling US\$ 16.9 trillion. Projections suggest that SOIs could collectively reach US\$ 60 trillion in 2025 and US\$ 75 trillion by 2030, as Gulf nations progress toward their ambitious economic visions.



In 2024, financial markets performed strongly across asset classes. Most global indices ended the year in positive territory, except for Brazil's BOVESPA and Korea's KOSPI, which both declined by approximately 10% due to political unrest and economic uncertainty. Global bonds posted a modest gain of **+2.0%**, while global stocks surged by **+18.1%**. Private markets also had an impressive year, with private equity benchmarks climbing **+21.2%** and infrastructure investments growing steadily at **+10.9%**.

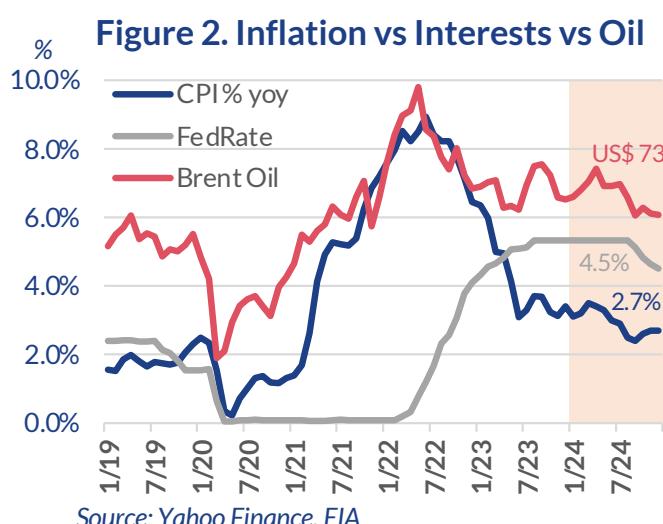


Table 1. Returns of asset classes

Asset Class	2023	2024	Benchmark
Fixed Income	+8.4%	+2.0%	S&P500B
Public Equities	+20.7%	+18.1%	S&PGL1200
Real Estate	+8.3%	+1.4%	S&P500RE
Infrastructure	+2.5%	+10.9%	S&PGLInfra
Private Equity	+33.6%	+21.2%	S&PLPE
Hedge Funds	+5.9%	+10.1%	EH HFI
Av. Oil Price	US\$ 82	US\$ 80	Brent Oil

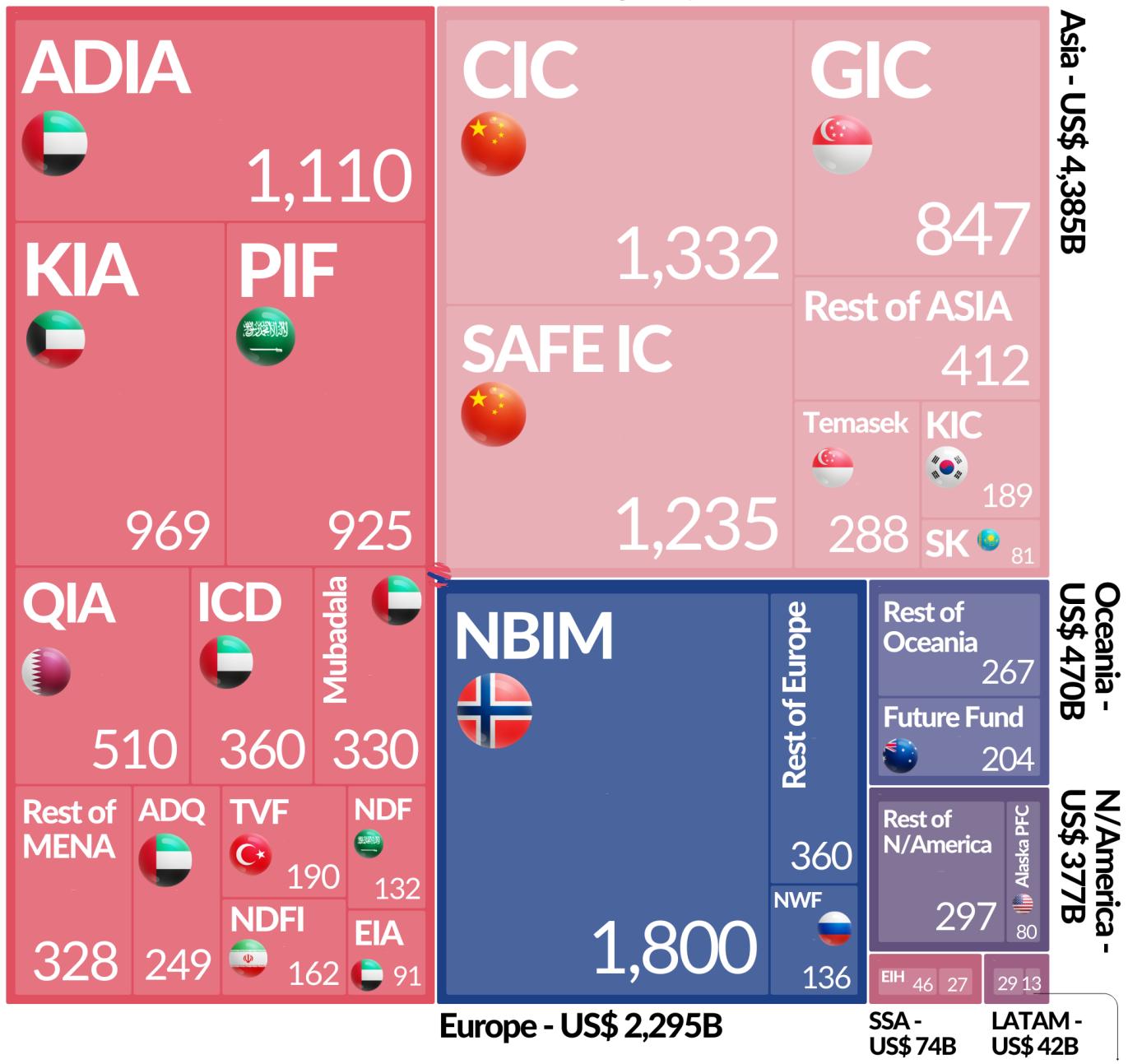
Source: S&P, EurekaHedge, Yahoo Finance



Figure 3. The US\$ 13 trillion SWF Pie

MENA - US\$ 5,356B

Figures represent AUM of SWFs in Billions of US\$

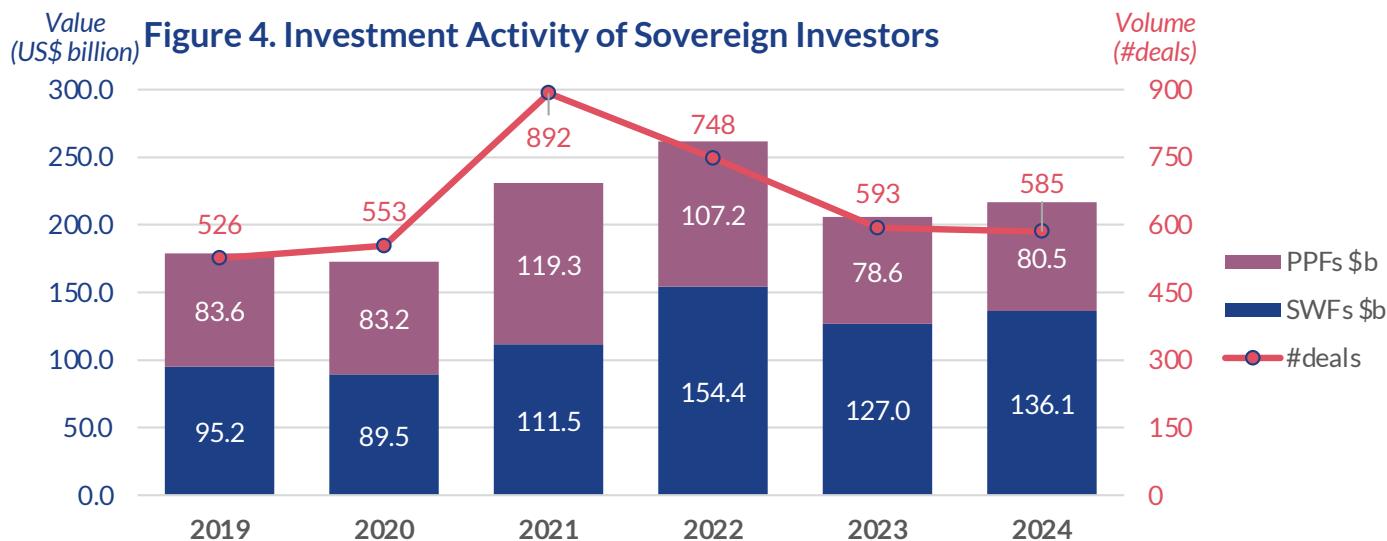


Source: Global SWF Data, Vizualytiks Chart.

Sovereign Wealth Funds reached a historic milestone in 2024, managing US\$ 13 trillion in assets. This capital is highly concentrated in two regions: the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)**, which accounts for 38% of the total, and **Southeast Asia**, which holds 10%. Additionally, two countries dominate the landscape: **China**, with 20% of total assets, and **Norway**, with 14%, including the world's largest SWF. The governance structures, mandates, and investment strategies of these funds vary significantly, underscoring the complexity of the industry. As the adage goes, "If you know one sovereign wealth fund, you know one sovereign wealth fund".



SOIs increased their investment activity in 2024, despite the number of deals remaining relatively unchanged from 2023. The average transaction size rose to US\$ 0.37 billion, reflecting strong demand for large infrastructure and credit deals. Compared to 2023, investments by SWFs grew by **+7%** to **US\$ 136.1 billion** across 358 transactions, while PPFs increased their investments by **+2%** to **US\$ 80.5 billion** across 227 deals.



Source: Global SWF Data Platform. Figures include private market transactions and sizeable and long-term equity deals, and exclude domestic developments and Government transfers

Mubadala emerged as the lead investor in 2024, deploying **US\$ 29.2 billion** across 52 deals – a **+67%** increase from the previous year, according to our methodology. The Abu Dhabi-based SWF continues to expand across regions and industries, supported by subsidiaries such as ADIC (the Council), Mubadala Capital, and MGX. Alongside Mubadala, four other Gulf funds ranked among the Top 10 global dealmakers: Abu Dhabi peers **ADIA** and **ADQ**, Saudi Arabia's **PIF**, and Qatar's **QIA**, collectively referred to as the "**Oil Five**."

The remaining slots in the league table were filled by Singapore's **GIC** and **Temasek**, which were significantly more active than in 2023, two Canadian "**Maple Eight**" funds (**CPP** and **CDPQ**), and **APG** from the Netherlands. Collectively, the **Oil Five** invested a record US\$ 82 billion in 2024, while Canadian, Singaporean, and Australian funds increased their investments but remained below their peaks in 2021–2022.

Regional preferences among SOIs varied widely. While some Gulf funds displayed a slight bias toward emerging markets, including their domestic economies, developed economies remained the top choice for most sovereign investors. The standout markets in 2024 were the UK, Australia, Italy, and Germany, although India, China, and Indonesia also continued to gain prominence within the portfolios of sovereign investors.

In terms of industries, SWFs and PPFs increased their allocations to real assets, which together accounted for over 50% of total capital deployed despite a modest correction in the real estate sector. Meanwhile, healthcare, industrials, and consumer sectors saw declines in both deal value and volume, while technology experienced a strong recovery despite broader challenges in the venture capital space.

Private credit gained momentum, with 12 mega-deals (exceeding US\$ 1 billion) recorded in 2024. Some of these transactions involved investments in general partnerships, a strategy frequently employed by Abu Dhabi funds in recent years. The year also saw significant divestments and a growing adoption of secondary markets among state-owned investors.

SOIs saw their U.S. equities portfolios grow by an average of 30% in 2024, partly thanks to their high exposure to the "**Magnificent Seven**" stocks, which collectively reached a market capitalization of US\$ 18 trillion.



Key Sections of the Report:

The forward-looking section of ***The World in 2025*** explores macroeconomic and geopolitical scenarios and anticipates trends for the year ahead. **Dr. Guan Seng Khoo**, former Director of Risk at **Temasek** and **AIMCo** and faculty member of the **SWF Academy**, provides insights into the intersection of ESG and AI, and how artificial intelligence could transform sustainability and resilience strategies for sovereign investors.

In line with our 2024 Annual Report, we offer a ***State of Play*** of the latest developments and trends in each of the alternative asset classes: private equity, including investments in GPs, private credit, real estate, infrastructure, and energy. We also look at the balance between green energy and black/brown energy.

The ***Fund of the Year*** goes to **AustralianSuper** stood out and was a worthy recipient of the 2024 award. The superannuation fund now manages US\$ 246 billion for 3.4 million members, and has set up ambitious goals for 2030 and beyond. In 2024, it continued to lead by example, demonstrating consistent performance, leadership in sustainability, and strategic growth through its growing international offices in New York and London. The recognition is discussed with **Damian Moloney**, Deputy CIO of the fund, and will be presented to **Mikaël Limpalaër**, Head of Americas, at an in-person event in New York City on January 7.

The ***Theme of the Year*** goes to Digitalization, which is being driven by the rapid adoption of AI. In 2024, Sovereign Investors completed record investments in digital infrastructure, including telecom towers and fiber networks; in data centers around the world; in AI trailblazers such as DataBricks, OpenAI and xAI; and in space investing, with **Mubadala** and **PIF** advancing the UAE's and Saudi's space agendas.

The ***Region of the Year*** goes to the UK, for a number of reasons. First, the new chancellor is focusing on the country's various sovereign vehicles, including the newly renamed **National Wealth Fund** and the US\$ 0.5 trillion pension system, which may be revamped soon. Second, it gained significant momentum by attracting US\$ 26 billion from sovereign funds, **+64%** up from 2023. And lastly, its capital city London continues to be the preferred destination for SOIs' offices overseas (Canada's **HOOPP** and Australia's **ART** in 2024 alone). **Chris Hayward**, Policy Chairman of the City of London Corporation, shares the reasons for this popularity.

The section ***Operational Matters*** sheds a light on key trends, including the growth of the human capital of both SWFs and PPFs, and the debate around performance and compensation at executive level, recently sparked by **AIMCo**. In addition, we explore other key developments:

- New funds: five SWFs were launched in 2024, including **Mutapa**, **Sarawak**, **DIF**, **Future Ireland Funds** and **NWF**, alongside sub-vehicles like Oman's **FFO** and China's **GBAF**;
- New overseas offices: Sovereign Investors opened nine new representative offices in 2024, including San Francisco, New York (two), London (two), Paris, Mumbai, and Gujarat (two);
- New CEOs: a significant churn rate saw 29 new top executives, including some of the key changes in the Gulf-based funds we predicted in our last year's report; and
- New CIOs: 16 top investment executives were appointed, including funds establishing the function for the first time, like **British Business Bank** and Greece's **Growthfund**.

Finally, the section ***State-Owned Investors 2030*** offers a revised set of projections, considering the increase in the industry's AuM this year. It is never easy to predict a multi-year period for an ever-changing industry, but we expect global assets of Sovereign Wealth Funds, Public Pension Funds and Central Banks, to reach a combined US\$ 59.5 trillion in 2025, and US\$ 74.5 trillion by 2030. By then, the ranking may be led by Norway's **NBIM**, Saudi's **PIF** and Japan's **GPIF**, each managing over US\$ 2 trillion in assets.

The report concludes with detailed appendices, including the latest rankings for the Top 100 SWFs, PPFs, and central banks by assets under management and foreign reserves, summaries of monthly reports shared with subscribers, and an overview of the **GSR Scoreboard** published on July 1, 2024.

The SWF Academy

*An exclusive partnership
between **Global SWF** and
INSEAD to nurture the **future
leaders** of the world's top
Sovereign Investors*

Next Cohorts:

10-14 Feb 2025 - Abu Dhabi

19-23 May 2025 - Singapore



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