Helaba

Focus on: Credit
15 October 2025

EUR corporate bonds: Primary market Q3 2025

Virtually unstoppable momentum

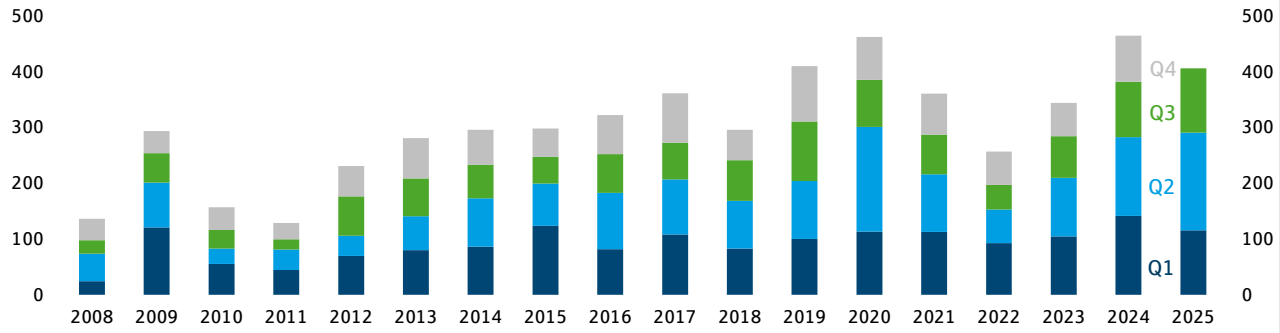


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The primary market for euro-denominated corporate bonds set a new record in the third quarter of 2025, fuelled by strong issuance activity in September, when total placements reached approximately € 65 billion—well above the levels seen in recent years. In total, around 200 individual bond issues amounting to € 115 billion were recorded over the quarter. The market benefited in particular from relatively stable funding conditions, as declining risk premiums largely offset a moderate rise in euro swap rates within the investment-grade segment. While several cyclical sectors profited from a more pronounced tightening of spreads, some defensive industries - such as telecommunications - came under slightly greater pressure. Our analysis indicates that the market's favourable momentum is likely to continue in the months ahead. In the first eight trading days of the final quarter, new placements had already totalled around € 9 billion, and we expect annual issuance in the euro corporate bond market to reach a new all-time high of between € 480 billion and € 500 billion.

Record market volume in Q3

Euro corporate bonds*: Issuance volume in EUR (billions)



*issues with a minimum volume of EUR 50 million.
Sources: Bloomberg, bondradar, Helaba Research & Advisory

Small benchmarks dominate; bonds with ESG components mostly in green format

In the third quarter, single bonds with volumes between € 500 million and € 1 billion once again accounted for nearly 70 % of total issuance, while transactions exceeding € 1.5 billion remained comparatively rare. The largest overall placements during the quarter were brought to market by NTT (€ 5.5 billion across four tranches in July), Capgemini (€ 4 billion in four tranches in September), Altice France (€ 3.7 billion across seven tranches in September), and Schneider Electric (€ 2.75 billion across three tranches in August). The market share of bonds with an ESG component saw a modest recovery, rising by around two percentage points compared with the previous quarter to 18 %. Issuance in this segment consisted almost entirely of green bonds with earmarked use of proceeds; by contrast, sustainability-linked bonds accounted for less than 10% of total ESG issuance.

Industrials once again lead by volume and number of issues; non-European issuers maintain strong presence

At € 21 billion, or 19 % of total issuance, telecommunications companies accounted for the largest share of market volume in the third quarter, ahead of industrials with € 18 billion (16 %). Since the start of the year, however, industrials have maintained their top spot with 133 placements totalling just under € 64 billion, while utilities remain in second place with 107 issues generating proceeds of € 58 billion. The third quarter also saw continued strong activity on the market by corporates based outside of Europe, whose market share held steady at 27 %, unchanged from the first half of the year. However, activity by US issuers, in particular, has recently eased somewhat with French companies edging them into second place over the first nine months of 2025. During this period, French companies raised approximately € 78 billion—representing 19 % of total market volume—compared with € 72 billion, or 18 %, from US issuers.

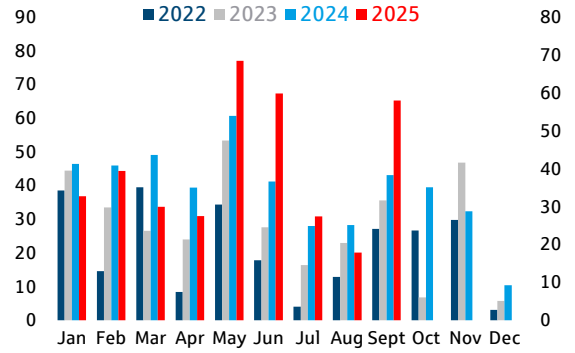
Subordinated and sub-IG bonds steady as floaters capture larger slice of market

Subordinated bonds accounted for 6 % of total market volume in the first three quarters of the year, in line with the first half. Sub-investment-grade notes similarly maintained their share at around one fifth of total issuance. The market share of bonds in BBB rating categories also held steady, representing just under 40 % of the market. The 5- to 7-year maturity segment remained very popular in the third quarter, with nearly 30 % of placement volume issued within this range between January and September (H1: 29 %). Additionally, the share of floating-rate issuance continued to grow, reaching 10 % of total market volume in the first nine months of 2025.

Chartbook: Euro-denominated corporate bond issuance

Record-breaking volume in September

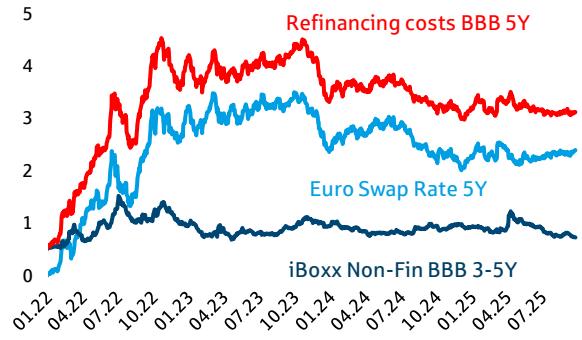
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume in EUR (billions)*



Sources: Bloomberg, bondradar, Helaba Research & Advisory

Recent sideways trend in funding costs

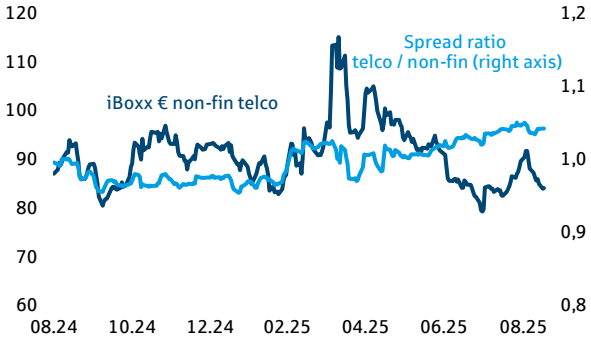
EUR corporate bonds BBB: Euro swap rate und iBoxx ASW in %*



Sources: LSEG, Helaba Research & Advisory

Pressure currently building on telco spreads

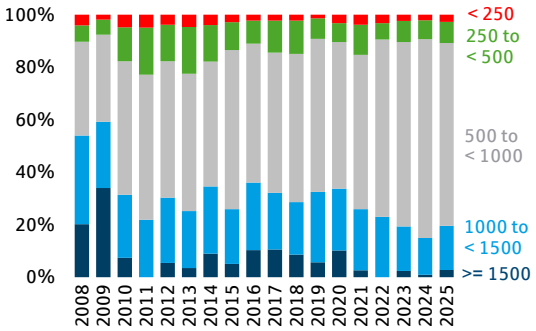
Development of asset swap spread relative to iBoxx € non-financials



Sources: Blo LSEG, Helaba Research & Advisory

Large benchmarks see uptick in popularity

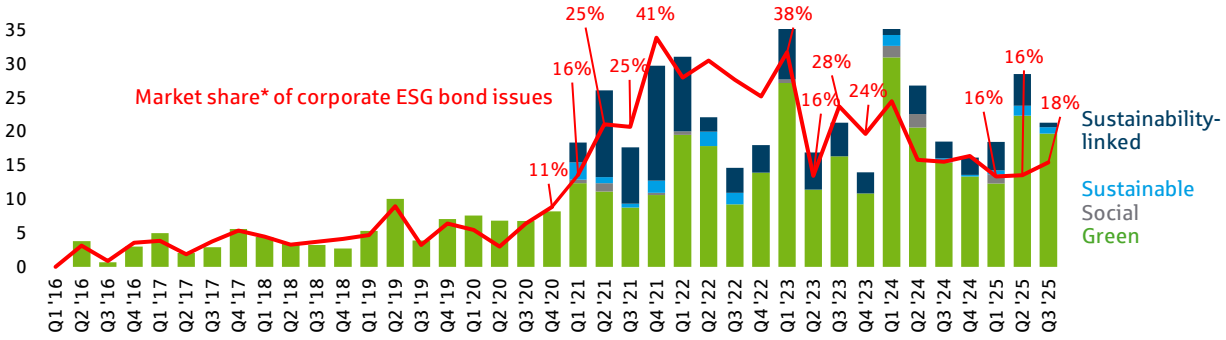
EUR corporate bonds: Placements by issue size in EUR (millions)*



Sources: Bloomberg, bondradar, Helaba Research & Advisory

Modest rebound in ESG bond issuance

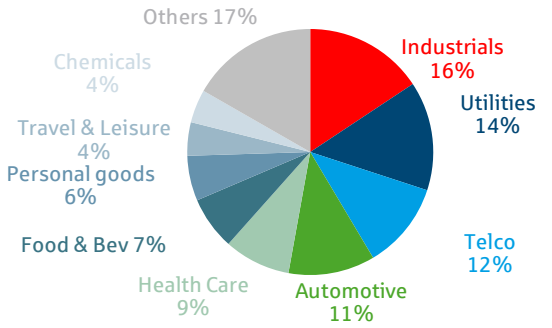
Corporate ESG bond placements in EUR (billions)*



*includes sustainable, social and sustainability-linked bonds from Q1 2021.
Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

Industrials and utilities with largest volume ...

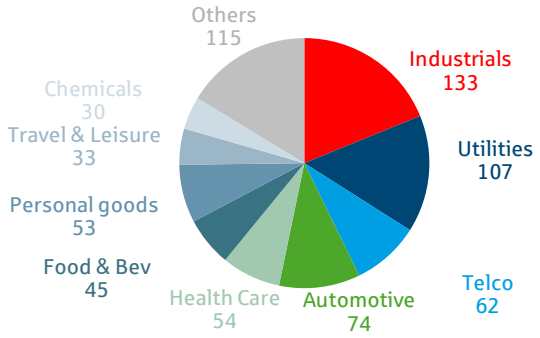
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by sector, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

... and highest number of individual bonds

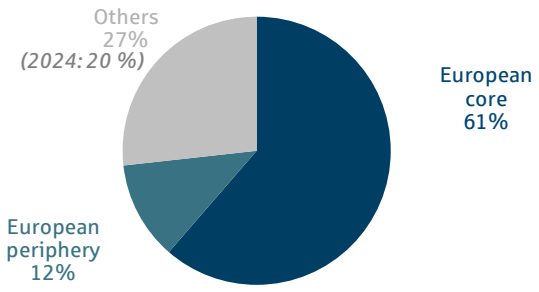
EUR corporate bonds: Number of issues by sector, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

Significant market share of non-Europeans

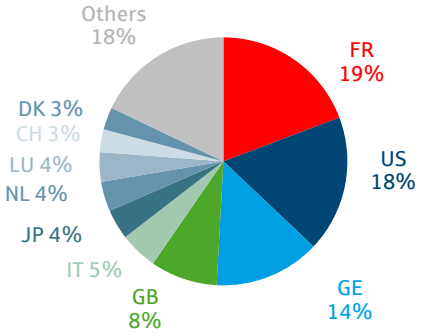
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by region, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

French corporates place largest volume

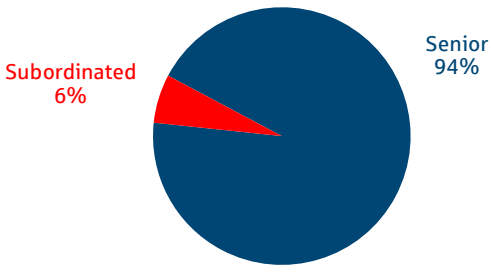
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by country of origin, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

Subordinated bonds with typical share of market

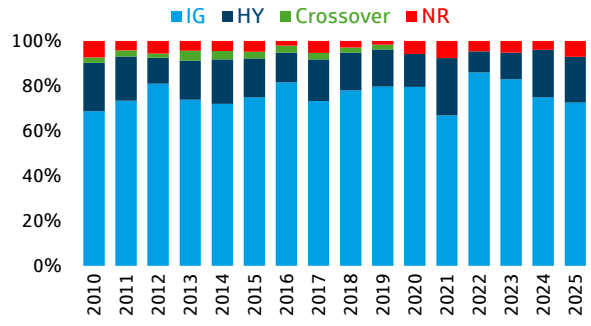
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by ranking, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

Sub-IG issuers expand market share

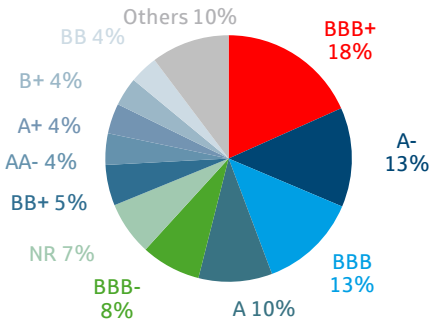
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by credit quality group



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

"BBB" classes fall below 40 % of issuance volume

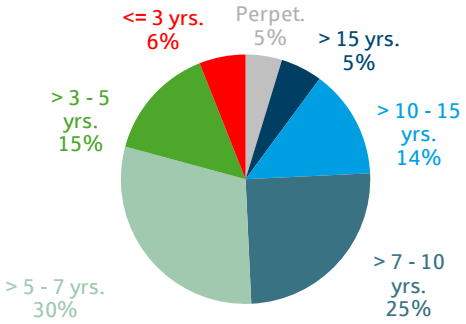
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by rating category, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

Nearly one in three bonds with maturity of 5 - 7yrs

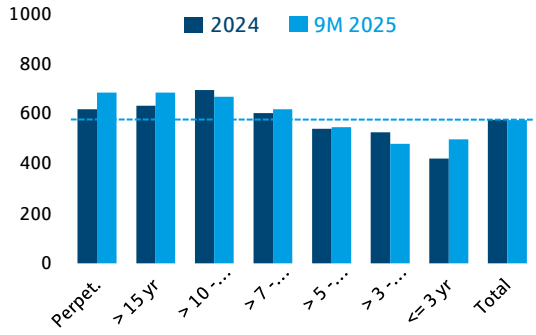
EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by maturity, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

Average bond size approaching 2024 level

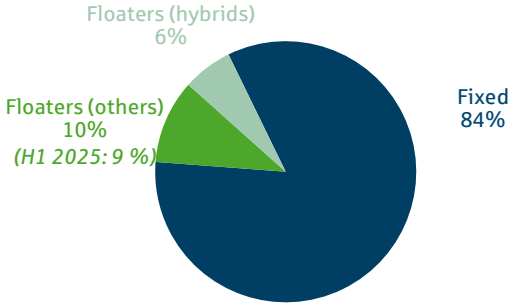
EUR corporate bonds: Average issuance size in EUR (millions)



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

Floaters highly sought after

EUR corporate bonds: Issuance volume by fixed vs. floating, 9M 2025



Sources: Bloomberg, Helaba Research & Advisory

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