

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Monthly report March 2024

Profile

DoubleDividend Management B.V. (DoubleDividend) is an independent responsible investment specialist. Where asset management is concerned we put together a portfolio tailored to your needs, whilst taking into account the desired risk profile, the investment horizon and the desired sustainability profile of the portfolio. Primary use is made of funds managed by DoubleDividend. Clients include wealthy individuals, associations and foundations. DoubleDividend operates under the full supervision of the AFM and DNB.

Investment philosophy:

- Sustainability makes a positive contribution to the risk-return profile of an investment portfolio.
- Investment is a long-term practice.
- We invest with conviction and only in quality in order to achieve a resilient portfolio.
- We aim to achieve a realistic return, taking risks into account
- Risk refers to the permanent loss of capital in the long term and not short-term volatility.
- We engage with the client and also invest in the funds managed by DoubleDividend.

Performance

It was a relatively quiet month on the financial markets. Both equities and bonds managed to rise as a result of slightly falling interest rates. All DD-funds closed the month with a positive return, but the differences were not large. The earnings season is coming to an end and investors are mainly looking forward to the ECB's interest rate decision on April 11.

The returns for the different risk profiles were close to each other in March. The defensive risk profile achieved a return of 1.7%, making it the best of all risk profiles. The neutral risk profile achieved a return of 1.6% in March, increasing the return for the year to 6.8%.

Market data*	Mar	2024
Equities		
MSCI World	3.4%	11.4%
S&P 500	3.3%	13.3%
Euro Stoxx 600	4.2%	7.8%
Bonds		
World**	1.1%	-0.3%
Real Estate		
EPRA Global	3.6%	1.0%
Infrastructure		
Renewable Energy	1.1%	-10.5%
Interest rates		
10-yr Germany	2.30%	
10-yr US	4.20%	
Currencies		
EUR/USD	-0.1%	-2.3%
Other (in USD)		
Gold	9.1%	8.1%
Oil (Brent)	4.6%	13.6%

* Total returns in euros, the price changes of gold and oil are calculated in US dollars.

** Barclays Global Aggregate Index

This information does not provide sufficient basis for an investment decision. On the website of DoubleDividend Management B.V. (doubledividend.nl) you can find relevant information, including the consumer letter and the Key Investor Information and the prospectus of a fund managed by DoubleDividend. DoubleDividend Management B.V. is supervised by the Netherlands Authority for the Financial Markets. The returns given have not been audited by an accountant.

Market developments

There was little spectacular news on the financial markets in March. Macroeconomic figures and geopolitical developments will determine stock market news in the coming period. Investors are especially looking forward to the ECB's interest rate decision on April 11. Last month, Francois Villeroy, chairman of the French central bank, said that a rate cut in April or June is very likely. According to Villeroy, the ECB is confident that inflation will move towards the 2% target, which means there is broad support for lowering interest rates soon. However, the chance that interest rates will be cut as early as April is not that great. Villeroy is known as an optimist and Lagarde, president of the ECB, recently emphasized that there must first be more evidence that inflation has been reduced sufficiently before interest rates can actually be lowered. The consensus now is that the ECB will take the first step in June to lower interest rates from 4% to 3.75%.

Table: net returns for the various risk profiles*

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average till Mar per year*	Total
Defensive	8,8%	1,3%	7,4%	-1,3%	4,7%	2,8%	-4,4%	17,7%	3,9%	5,4%	-19,6%	11,3%	4,2%	3,1%	44,7%
Moderately defensive	10,1%	3,2%	10,0%	1,5%	5,4%	3,6%	-3,7%	20,6%	4,2%	8,0%	-21,0%	13,4%	5,4%	4,5%	71,1%
Neutral	12,2%	5,7%	11,1%	4,9%	6,4%	4,6%	-2,7%	22,7%	4,5%	11,2%	-22,5%	15,6%	6,7%	6,0%	104,2%
Offensive	13,9%	8,3%	14,8%	7,9%	7,3%	5,8%	-1,7%	26,1%	6,4%	14,7%	-24,5%	18,3%	8,4%	7,9%	154,0%
Very offensive	15,4%	9,6%	16,7%	10,1%	8,5%	6,4%	-1,1%	29,3%	7,6%	18,6%	-26,2%	20,0%	9,6%	9,3%	196,9%

* The returns are based on the tactical asset allocation, after all costs, and with invested capital up to EUR 1 million. The value of your investments can fluctuate. Past performance is no guarantee for the future.

Outlook

We expect financial markets in 2024 to be dominated by broadly the same themes as in 2023. The crucial question is whether the decline in inflation will continue in 2024 and whether central banks will be able to cut interest rates as a result. In addition, the big question is to what extent economic growth will weaken in 2024. Also, with the wars in Ukraine and Gaza and the rivalry between the West and the rest, political and geopolitical developments will continue to play an important role. Finally, elections are taking place in many parts of the world with the most important event, of course, being the U.S. presidential election.

Financial markets will therefore continue to operate in a highly uncertain environment in the coming year, so volatility is expected to continue. Our base case (further decline in inflation, interest rate cuts during 2024, no sharp recession and no substantial deterioration in the relationship between the U.S. and China) is favourable for both equities and bonds. But the uncertainties are, as mentioned, high; a long-term horizon therefore remains essential, especially for the more risky risk profiles.

Our investment quality criteria as reflected in the "schijf van vijf" ensure that we are well positioned to meet our expected long-term return objectives, even under the current uncertain market conditions. Within equities and alternatives, we are invested in sectors supported by attractive long-term growth prospects in areas such as digitalization, healthcare and sustainability, such as the energy transition. Innovation is critical for companies in a rapidly changing world with significant challenges. There is a growing overlap between technology and innovation on the one hand and sustainability and healthcare on the other. New generation chips and data centers, software and cloud services are essential in reducing energy consumption and electrifying the economy and transportation. Healthcare is also leaning increasingly heavily on technology. Examples include surgical robots, the accelerated development of medication using AI, electronic health records and genetic engineering. The distinction between our three main themes of technology, healthcare and sustainability is thus becoming increasingly hybrid: the great common denominator is innovation and trend growth.

The outlook for bonds is good due to increased interest rates, making the risk-return ratio attractive again. The cycle of interest rate hikes appears to be over, which removes the risk of sharp price declines. At the same time, bonds offer attractive coupons. Any drop in interest rates is an optional bonus. Main risk for bonds remains a rebound in inflation. A weaker economy is a risk for corporate bonds, as risk premiums can rise. However, government bonds are also not without risk because of high government debt levels. Populist policies are usually not good news for treasuries: governments need to borrow more at higher interest rates. The correlation between bonds and equities remains high in the short term, but is expected to decline over time as inflation normalizes further.

Tactical asset allocation

Each investment profile has a strategic allocation with bandwidths to equities, bonds and alternatives. The table below gives an overview of the five different standard investment profiles (without bandwidths). The classifications of risk profiles are motivated by the AFM (the Dutch Authority for the Financial Markets) and mainly based on historical risks and returns.

Table: profiles and strategic asset allocation

RISK PROFILES	Defensive	Moderate defensive	Neutral	Offensive	Very offensive
Equities	22%	33%	47%	65%	80%
Bonds	73%	61%	45%	25%	10%
Alternatives	5%	6%	8%	10%	10%
Cash	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: DoubleDividend Management B.V.

Within the ranges, it is possible to respond to current market conditions. We call this the tactical asset allocation. In recent years we have opted for a slight overweighting of equities and alternatives at the expense of bonds because of the meagre expected returns for bonds. We decided to only lightly overweigh equities, but to bring alternatives back to the norm weight. The reason for this is that because of sharply higher interest rates and risk premiums this year, the risk-return ratio for bonds has improved significantly. On the other hand, higher interest rates are bad for capital-intensive alternative sectors such as real estate and, to a lesser extent, sustainable infrastructure. While the valuation of most real estate and sustainable infrastructure companies is (very) attractive, the risk has also increased. This made us decide to bring the weight of alternatives in each risk profile back to the strategic norm weighting in a number of steps for existing clients.

Tactical asset allocation

