

Santander US Equity 6/2025

Fund commentary

The fund closed the month of June with a very positive absolute return, significantly outperforming its benchmark index.

June ended with strong gains in global equities, consolidating a very positive first half, especially in the U.S. and emerging markets, The S&P 500 reached new all-time highs driven by the strength of large tech companies and renewed appetite for AI-related assets.

In this market environment we would like to highlight the Santander US Equity fund, is an actively managed North American equity fund, with the S&P500 as its benchmark. This is an Article 8 fund incorporating sustainable investment criteria. The fund targets large companies, with a significant capitalization, good business prospects and always thinking in the long term. We seek to put together a diversified portfolio without any specific bias, but with a flexible investment style always trying to capture the best opportunities at any given moment.

On a relative basis, The main contributors during the month were the overweight and stock selection in financials (notably the strong performance of Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, and CapitalOne), as well as stock selection in technology (thanks to portfolio bets such as IBM, Oracle, Marvell, and Netflix, as well as short positions in Adobe and Accenture, among others), and in consumer discretionary (Tapestry and Elf continue to rise strongly, while we hold a short position in Tesla). On the negative side, the biggest detractor was our underweight position in the energy sector, as well as bets in basic materials (CRH and Linde).

In terms of portfolio changes, in the technology sector, specifically within the cybersecurity niche, we implemented a shift in preference by selling our position in SentinelOne and opening a new one in Zscaler. Zscaler is one of the top players in the niche of cloud-based security solutions, helping to protect corporate web traffic. The company is benefiting from a structural shift, with businesses moving all their servers and data to the cloud. Despite a demanding valuation, its premium is justified by its higher growth profile compared to peers and its potential to capture a significant share in new markets. Also in technology, we sold our position in Shopify after a solid performance relative to the market over the past year. Additionally, its core business—e-commerce for small and medium-sized enterprises—may be affected by the current tariff disruption. Finally, we slightly increased the defensive profile of the portfolio by opening a new position in Kroger, within the food retail niche. Kroger is one of the largest food retailers in the United States in terms of annual sales, with a total of 2,750 stores.

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Currently, the fund has an equity exposure of around 96%. In terms of sector positioning, the largest overweights are in financials, basic materials, and industrials. Meanwhile, the largest underweights are in consumer discretionary, energy, and real estate sectors.

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