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GC 35 YEARS

PLUS: CAN THE CAPITAL MARKETS UNION SAVE EUROPE FROM MEDIOCRITY?

WHICH MARKET WILL BE THE NEXT T+1 DOMINO TO FALL?

SURVEY: AGENT BANKS IN MAJOR MARKETS

NAVIGATING ASIA'S *complexity:*

Why local expertise remains crucial for custodians in an era of change

We explore the key drivers of growth, the rise of digital assets, regulatory complexity and the future of custody in Asia Pacific.

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The gifts that keep on giving

This issue is full of familiar topics with new angles.

It's that time of year where we all take stock of what's being talked about at the many, many industry events taking place throughout Fall – and for us here at Global Custodian, it's piece together a magazine based on what's hot and leave out what's not.

For many, July and August are slower months and upon returning in September we really get to see what the agenda is for the rest of the year and beyond.

Perhaps unsurprisingly for the securities services industry, nothing particularly new has arisen thematically – it's still settlement cycles, technology and regulation as the headliners with data, private markets and some regional focuses as the supporting act.

But under these umbrella themes are seeing some interesting sub-topics.

Starting with our old friend T+1, the conversation has now moved on from North America with the focus now on who's next. Europe, the UK, Australia, Singapore? Place your bets now, because the answer still isn't clear. In this issue we look at who might be – and who should be next – as we wonder what the impacts of settlement cycle fragmentation might be on the global markets.

And speaking of themes which aren't new, allow me to introduce the Capital Markets Union (CMU), borrowing timeliness characteristics from its European counterpart T2S, the initiative has rumbled on for over a decade now with little to show for it outside of criticism and in-fighting. Now on its third iteration, the stakes are high as Europe looks to make itself more competitive as a single unit on the global stage at a critical juncture. In this issue we look at what to expect from this endeavour which has been thrust back into the spotlight.

Elsewhere, fitting with the headline of 'gifts that keep on giving', we can't talk enough about Asia at the moment, which is timely given this year's Sibos takes place in Beijing this October.

In our latest deep dive, we follow up on our recent feature on how 'Asia's momentum points to golden age for asset servicers' by further exploring the key drivers of growth, the rise of digital assets, regulatory complexity and the future of custody in Asia Pacific.

Don't be put off delving into this issue by the 'nothing new to see here' analysis – the bottom line is that grappling with settlement reduction, assessing new technologies and planning for a tokenised/digital future is taking up all the securities services industry's attention and focus right now.

The important thing is that these topics are all tailwinds for an industry looking to evolve to be faster and more efficient, acknowledging that if you are standing still, then you are essentially moving backwards.

Jonathan Watkins
Managing Editor
Global Custodian

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PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Euroclear has appointed **Sébastien Danloy** as its new chief business officer, adding the experience securities services executive after just an eight-month spell at BNP Paribas. The ICSD has also added **Neil Atkinson** as its new global client executive team. He served over five years at HSBC as managing director and global head of platform solutions for banks and broker dealers.

Blythe Masters and **Roman Regelman** have joined FNZ, a wealth management technology firm, with Regelman as group president and Masters as group CEO.

State Street has appointed **Joerg Ambrosius** as president of investment services, assuming the role that CEO **Ron O'Hanley** has temporarily held since October last year.

BNY has named **Dylan Curley** as the new client coverage global head of alternatives for its asset servicing business and **Paul Fleming** as manging director, head of alternatives.

AccessFintech has appointed JP Morgan's former global head of data strategy and AI within its securities services business, **Naveen TV**, as head of product in a major addition to its ranks.

JP Morgan has announced senior appointments in its securities finance and tri-party businesses. **Simon Heath** becomes global head of agency securities finance, and **George Rennick** is appointed global head of tri-party.

BNP Paribas has announced the appointment of **Elaine Tan** as its new head of asset owners and asset managers client lines for securities services.

State Street has appointed **Tomas Truzzi** as CEO of State Street Brazil, replacing **Telly Theodoropoulos**. The custodian has also added **Charlotte Blackie** from RBC Investor Services to its network management team, **Ken Shaw** as head of ETF solutions, EMEA, and **Vanessa Fernandes**, previously from BNY, as the new head of digital asset solutions.

CIBC Mellon has promoted **Cynthia Shaw-Pereira** and **Joe Lacopo** in its asset owner and asset manager segments. Shaw-Pereira will lead the asset owner strategy, focusing on data-driven insights, while Lacopo will continue to lead the asset manager strategy, emphasising digital enablement solutions.

Northern Trust has appointed **Ian Hamilton**, currently the head of asset owners UK, as the new head of asset owners for Europe. The custodian has also named **Jebens** as head of client development, Southeast Asia; **Chris Vera** as senior digital solutions consultant, APAC for its asset servicing business; and Michelle Gaines to the role of chief administrative officer for its EMEA asset owners' business.

Citi has named **Eduardo Gramuglia** Pallavicino as the country officer & banking head for Luxembourg.

Kate Webber, head of product strategy for Northern Trust's asset servicing business has left the firm to become chief responsible investment solutions officer at Principles for Responsible Investment.

HSBC's global head of institutional sales for markets and securities services franchise, **Allegra Berman**, will leave the bank after more than a decade.

Lou Maiuri, former chief operating officer and head of investment services at State Street, has been appointed as chairman and group CEO of wealth management technology firm AssetMark Financial Holdings.

EquiLend's current CEO **Brian Lamb** is to depart from the firm, leaving at the end of 2024.

HSBC has appointed **Giovanni Fenocchi** as its global head of securities services sales. Fenocchi has worked at HSBC for 25 years, holding a number of senior positions during his time at the bank – including the position of global head of issuer services at HSBC Global Banking and Markets.

Pirum has announced two key leadership appointments, with **Ben Challice** rejoining the firm as president and chief strategy officer, while **Mark Hale** will step into the role of chief executive officer.

Citi is continuing to build out its fund services business with former JP Morgan talent with the latest addition seeing **Chris Morin** named as global head of middle-office and performance.

NEWS ROUND-UP

Asia-based insurance giant **AIA Group** has selected **BNY** and **BlackRock** to provide a front-to-back investment platform, supporting the firm's long-term investment programme.

State Street is partnering with Swiss-based fintech **Taurus** to boost its digital asset capabilities, as the custodian moves to replace its previous partner Copper which it cut ties with over a year ago.

BNY has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire **Archer**, a technology-enabled service provider of managed account solutions to the asset management industry.

Clearstream, **DekaBank** and **DZ Bank** have jointly issued two tokenised €5 million bonds using distributed-ledger technology (DLT).

Northern Trust has been appointed by **Valverde Investment Partners** to provide custody, fund administration, foreign exchange and cash management services for its newly formed **Variable Capital Company** (VCC) fund, along with its sub-fund, **ASEAN+ Fund** (VAPF). In addition, the custodian has also won mandates from **Legal & General** to provide depositary and fund administration services for its new private markets access fund; **Lancashire Country Pension Fund** to provide custody and performance measurement services; and Saudi Arabia's **National Development Fund** (NDF) as custodian for its 60 billion Saudi riyals ($16 billion) of assets under management, less than a year after the asset servicer revealed Riyadh as its new Middle East headquarters.

State Street has secured a mandate to serve as custodian bank for the multibillion-dollar Swiss social security funds for old-age and survivors' insurance, invalidity insurance and the loss of earnings compensation scheme, previously managed by UBS. The custodian has also secured a mandate with **Galapagos Global Capital Management**, a US-based hedge fund manager, to provide a range of services to its hedge funds Galápagos Macro Master LP. and Galápagos Macro Cayman. Other mandates this quarter include **Challenger Limited**, a publicly listed Australian investment management firm and **Coller Capital**, a UK-based specialist investor in the secondary markets for private capital.

JP Morgan has been selected by AUD30 billion Australian super fund, **Spirit Super**, to provide global custody and fund administration services.

HSBC has led asset servicing for the cross-listing of two Saudi Arabian ETFs for Chinese investors. In partnership with **China Merchants Bank**, HSBC will serve as the overseas custodian for the **Huatai-PineBridge** CSOP Saudi ETF, one of the Feeder ETFs.

Euroclear has acquired a strategic stake of 49% in **Inversis**, a provider of global investment technology solutions and outsourced financial services and will become the full owner of the firm by year-end 2027. The ICSD has also signed an agreement with asset management giant **BlackRock** to distribute its private market funds on the FundsPlace fund distribution platform; and been mandated by **China Construction Bank (Asia)** to integrate its FundsPlace solution into the bank's new Investment Fund services platform.

Citi's securities services unit has been selected by the **Taiwan Depository & Clearing Corporation** to provide global custody services as the Asian infrastructure implements a new centralised custody platform in the market.

State Street has rolled out Shariah-compliant global custody and fund administration services, in response to growing demand for Islamic finance.

JP Morgan has successfully completed the transition of A$13.8 billion ($9.39 billion) industry super fund, **Vision Super**.

BNP Paribas securities services has been appointed by the **Versorgungswerk der Zahnärztekammer Nordrhein** (VZN) as its new custodian, following a comprehensive selection process. The bank has also won mandates from The University of Sydney Endowment Fund to provide custody and fund administration services; and a reappointment as depositary bank for PAI Partners' eighth flagship fund, **PAI Partners** VIII, representing €7.1 billion.

Societe Generale Securities Services (SGSS) Luxembourg has been appointed as custodian, depositary bank, fund administrator, transfer agent and local representative agent by **Swiss Life Asset Managers** for the launch of its first ELTIF 2.0 structure.

*UP*DATE

[U P D A T E]

SEC maintains tough stance on crypto custody rule, but allows some exceptions

In a recent address on 9 September, SEC chief accountant Paul Munter reiterated that the guidelines laid out in SAB 121, introduced in March 2022, will remain firmly in place.

The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has reaffirmed its strict approach to how firms should account for the safeguarding of crypto assets, while acknowledging exceptions for institutions that demonstrate effective risk management measures.

The core of SAB 121 says that any firm holding crypto-assets for clients – whether a bank, broker, or exchange – needs to record a liability on its balance sheet to reflect its responsibility for safeguarding those assets. This liability is paired with a corresponding asset, which signifies the firm's right to control the crypto held on behalf of clients.

The policy supports the SEC's stance that safeguarding crypto-assets involves many legal, technological, and regulatory risks that need to be transparently reported.

According to Munter, the SEC continues to believe that firms responsible for holding crypto-assets should report a liability in most cases due to the possible risks.

"Absent particular mitigating facts and circumstances, the staff believes an entity should present a liability on its balance sheet to reflect its obligation to safeguard crypto-assets held for others," Munter said.

While the SEC holds firm on its requirements, Munter noted that there are some exceptions for institutions that have taken steps to minimise the risks associated with safeguarding crypto-assets.

For instance, some banks proved their crypto custody arrangements were "bankruptcy-remote," meaning that if the bank goes bankrupt, the crypto-assets would not be part of the bank's estate and would be protected from creditors.

These banks secured approvals from state and federal regulators, set up strict controls, and got legal assurances for asset safety in bankruptcy. As a result, the SEC did not require them to record a liability on their balance sheets.

Similarly, introducing broker-dealers who handle crypto transactions but don't hold the crypto keys were able to avoid recognising a liability. They used third-party custodians and clarified their role as intermediaries, showing that the responsibility for safeguarding the assets lies with the third party, not the broker.

The SAB 121 story has been one with plenty of twists and turns. The bulletin has hamstrung custodians by requiring them to hold the assets on their balance sheet and therefore subjecting them capital requirements which would outweigh the benefit of safeguarding the assets.

Despite passing through the US Senate and the House of Representatives, the resolution to overturn controversial crypto custody rule fell at the final hurdle with President Biden vetoing the proposals.

Then in July, Global Custodian reported that the SEC was reportedly close to signing off on modifications, according to Maxine Waters, US Congresswoman and top-ranking Democrat on the House Financial Services Committee, who was speaking at a hearing to overturn the Presidential veto of SAB 121.

Despite achieving a majority vote (228 against 184), the motion to reverse the veto failed as it required the support of two thirds of the house.

Transition to T+1 'harder than expected', finds Citi report

Reduction in clearing margin a key challenge for custodians, while European firms report most significant impact of T+1.

The switch to a shortened settlement cycle in North America has had a bigger effect than expected, with 44% of market participants reported to being significantly impacted by the transition – up from 28% a year ago.

This is according to a new report from Citi, which tracked the impact of a shortened settlement cycle across the world.

The survey found that the transition has been particularly strenuous for European participants – 60% of which reporting a significant impact to their operations as a result of T+1. This figure has more than doubled from 2023.

For specific affected sectors, securities lending remains one of the most strongly impacted activities — jumping from 33% to 50% this year. Funding has also seen notable impact — albeit with an imbalance across the sell-side and buy-sides. For brokers and custodians, the single biggest impact of T+1 has been the 30% reduction in clearing margin, with 80% of the sell-side seeing this development as strongly impactful to their businesses.

Additionally, over half (52%) of banks and brokers reported that the transition has had a significant impact on their headcounts and staffing levels. The whitepaper added that sell-side organisations have found themselves exposed to large volumes of manual processing and exception handling, triggered by clients.

Okan Pekin, head of securities services at Citi, said: "The move to T+1 has taken centre stage in the post-trade industry over the last few years. Our latest whitepaper – the largest since its inception in 2021 – focuses on the next frontier for the industry which is the growing applicability of technologies. This includes distributed ledger technology and digital assets, and the significant potential for tokenisation to scale. These developments will continue to transform the securities landscape as we continue to move towards shorter settlement cycles across multiple markets worldwide."

The whitepaper polled close to 500 market participants across the buy- and sell-side, and incorporates insights from 14 financial market infrastructures (FMIs). The report also includes an regional view of the industry across Asia Pacific, Europe, North America, and Latin America.

BNY to acquire managed account solutions provider Archer as custodian looks to capitalise on rapidly growing space

The acquisition will enhance BNY's capabilities across the entire managed account ecosystem as its head of asset servicing Emily Portney tells Global Custodian that asset management clients see this as an 'enormous area of expansion' that is crying out for traditional servicing.

The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation (BNY) has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire Archer, a technology-enabled service provider of managed account solutions to the asset management industry.

With the integration of Archer's managed account solutions, capabilities and professional servicing team, BNY plans to enhance its enterprise platform, supporting retail managed accounts across its entire platform and servicing a market that is projected to grow at a double-digit compound annual growth rate to over $8 trillion in assets over the next three years in the US.

"I have not been in a meeting with an asset manager since I've taken this job 18 months ago where they have not asked me about how BNY can help them with managed accounts," Emily Portney, global head of asset servicing at BNY, told Global Custodian. "More specifically, retail managed accounts.

"We know the market is growing at a double-digit compounded annual growth rate. The irony is that a large part of this market is actually serviced in-house by asset managers themselves because no one has yet cracked the nut of how to do this at scale; hence why Archer is just so impressive and important. It is one of the very few service providers out there that has a full tech stack and provides operational support for retail managed accounts."

The transaction is expected to close in the fourth quarter of 2024, subject to regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions. Financial terms were not disclosed.

In addition to augmenting BNY's existing asset servicing capabilities for managed accounts, Archer will provide BNY Investments and BNY Pershing's Wove wealth platform for advisors with expanded distribution of model portfolios and access to Archer's multi-custodial network.

"In asset servicing, we will now be able to service these vehicles just like we service mutual funds, money market funds, ETFs and private investment vehicles, on behalf of all of our clients," added Portney. "So this was a missing piece. You are never fully complete, because the industry and products are always evolving… but it certainly was an area that, at least in asset servicing, there really was a gap."

Archer provides asset and wealth managers with middle- and back-office solutions to address the managed account needs of institutional, private wealth and retail investors. Through its cloud-based platform, Archer aims to help its clients to expand distribution, streamline operations, launch new investment products and deliver personalised outcomes to a broader market.

"Today's asset and wealth managers have a strong desire to create multi-asset solutions across a variety of products, along with direct indexing and tax optimised portfolios, to meet the needs of their distribution partners and investors," added Bryan Dori, president and CEO of Archer. "As a new addition to the BNY platform, Archer's expertise, capabilities and scale will be leveraged across all of BNY to help even more clients drive long-term growth for their businesses."

Regarding BNY's approach to acquisitions, the Archer deal is not symbolic of a shift in approach, but the asset servicing giant does remain open to being active in adding to its services.

"We've always said that we are open to inorganic opportunities," explained Portney. "They [the opportunities] were going to be digestible opportunities that add capabilities, new types of clients, or particular jurisdictions. And that's how we have thought about acquisitions. This, like I said, is extraordinarily complementary."

Northern Trust goes live with digital platform for tokenised carbon credits

The Northern Trust Carbon Ecosystem is driven by Matrix Zenith, the firm's digital assets platform that leverages blockchain technology to manage digital asset lifecycle events.

Northern Trust has officially launched its Carbon Ecosystem to enable the transactions of tokenised carbon credits, with the first live transaction occurring on the blockchain-based platform.

The go-live of the platform follows Northern Trust's milestone of completing fully automated transactions on the initial minimum viable product, announced back in September 2023.

Pete Cherecwich, president of asset servicing at Northern Trust, said: "The Northern Trust Carbon Ecosystem supports the growing interest in the Voluntary Carbon Market by providing a digital lifecycle management capability for voluntary carbon credits."

The fully digital platform allows purchasers to transact tokenised carbon credits directly with project developers and retire these against their carbon footprint. Institutional investors can now connect with carbon credit suppliers who are focused on solutions to reduce greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide.

Cherecwich said: "The seamless and secure settlement experience is designed to give project developers and institutional buyers confidence in their carbon credit transactions, with Northern Trust as the custodian."

The voluntary carbon credit ecosystem across the industry utilises private blockchain technology, enabling institutional buyers to digitally access tokenised carbon credits directly from project developers.

The first official live transactions were carried out by Water Recovery Systems and CUT Carbon Distributed Technologies, selling carbon credits to institutional buyers for retirement.

Justin Chapman, global head of digital assets and financial markets, at Northern Trust, said: "The Northern Trust Carbon Ecosystem is just one example of the current and future planned applications of Northern Trust Matrix Zenith – the latest milestone in our asset servicing innovation journey. It supports key digital asset lifecycle events from asset creation, trading, pricing and custody to reporting. Leveraging blockchain technology, Northern Trust Matrix Zenith integrates with our core traditional asset servicing infrastructure to support digital and traditional assets side-by-side."

Northern Trust, in its role as the designated custodian, acts on instructions to record, transfer and settle digital carbon credits.

Cherecwich added: "Northern Trust Matrix Zenith is an asset- and market-agnostic platform that allows us to support our clients' digital asset strategies. This gives us flexibility to drive our focused developments in tandem with our broader collaborations with clients and industry stakeholders, helping us explore new opportunities while evolving with the rapidly changing marketplace."

ECB's T2S platform sees surge in transactions without sacrificing settlement efficiency

The growth in transaction values this year reflects a broader trend of increasing financial activity and confidence in the T2S system.

The European Central Bank's (ECB) Target2-Securities (T2S) platform has experienced a significant increase in transaction volumes since the beginning of the year. Notably, this growth has occurred without a rise in settlement failures; in fact, rates have decreased.

January began with a €18,324.1 billion in settled transactions, and by May, this figure had surged to €21,894.9 billion.

Daily transaction values mirrored this upward trend. In January, the daily average was €832.9 billion, but by June, it had climbed to €1,055.4 billion. Similarly, daily transaction volumes increased from 735,856 in January to 798,294 in June. This surge in activity illustrates a vibrant and expanding market, despite some suggestions in the past that T2S has not lived up to its full potential.

One of the most noteworthy aspects of T2S's performance this year is its ability to handle this increasing volume without a rise in settlement fails. In fact, settlement efficiency has been improving. The value of transactions settled efficiently remained high, peaking at 97.5% in April and maintaining strong levels throughout the year.

Settlement fail rates have actually dropped, a potential sign of T2S's effectiveness. While settlement efficiency by volume showed slight fluctuations, the overall trend has been positive. The volume efficiency was 95.1% in March and saw a slight decrease to 92.4% in June, but it's worth noting that these numbers still indicate a very high level of performance.

Pete Tomlinson, director, post-trade and prime services for the Association for Financial Markets in Europe (AFME) commented on the figures on LinkedIn, stating: "CSDR cash penalties are working!".

Auto-collateralisation, a key feature of T2S, has also demonstrated stability. The value percentage ranged from 15.6% in January to 13.1% in May, with volume percentages remaining steady around 1.8% to 1.9%. This consistency supports the growing volume of transactions while maintaining a reliable system of collateral management.

As transaction volumes increase and liquidity flows expand, the system has managed to handle these changes with high efficiency. The drop in settlement fail rates amidst rising activity is evidence and shows improving performance of T2S.

Euroclear to make first €1.5 billion payment to Ukraine fund from frozen Russian assets

ICSD also announces a redesign of the structure and composition of its top management team, which includes a string of appointments to the executive committee.

Euroclear will make a first payment of €1.55 billion ($1.68 billion) to the European Fund for Ukraine, following the recent implementation of the EU regulation on the windfall contribution.

The first payment is in addition to the €836 million of corporate taxes to be paid to the Belgian State on the profits related to the Russian assets in H1 2024.

The ICSD announced the payment as part of its half-year results for 2024, which revealed that €3.4 billion of the €4 billion interest income generated relate to Russian sanctioned assets.

In addition, Euroclear said that the sanctions and Russian countermeasures resulted in direct costs of €48 million and a loss of business income of €13 million. The remainder of the profits related to sanctioned assets are being put aside as an important buffer against current and future risks.

In the group's wider results, underlying operating income increased by 5% to reach a record €1.45 billion, while business income increased by 3% to €865 million.

Assets under custody reached a new record at €39.6 trillion, growing for the seventh quarter in a row – with Euroclear attributing the growth to "solid stock exchange performances coupled with robust results in fixed income".

Valerie Urbain, chief executive officer of Euroclear, said: "This is my first set of results as CEO of Euroclear and I am proud to announce continued strong results as clients entrusted us with record levels of safekeeping and settlement volumes. Our commitment to client satisfaction, operational excellence and innovation has driven this excellent performance.

"With an ambitious strategy and a committed team, Euroclear aims to extend its position as a European leader with a global footprint. Already in 2024, we have taken steps to further support the financing of the real economy by making capital markets more integrated, liquid, and efficient. Not only have we connected global investors to the world's tenth largest economy, South Korea, but we have also put in place a renewed focus on contributing to Europe's strategic autonomy and Capital Markets Union. Such efforts are of critical importance given the pressing need to finance the green and digital transition around the globe."

The business has also announced a redesign of the structure and composition of its top management team, which includes a string of new appointments to the executive committee.

Incoming Sébastien Danloy will join the committee in mid-September as Euroclear's new chief business officer; while internal appointments will see Peter Sneyers join the committee in his role as the chief executive officer of Euroclear Bank; Bernard Frenay in his role as group chief financial officer; and Daniel Miseur in his role as group chief people and communications officer.

Global Custodian reveals Industry Leaders *Awards* shortlists for New York ceremony

Global Custodian is pleased to announce the shortlists for its annual Industry Leaders Awards to be held in New York at Chelsea Piers on 21 November.

The evening recognises outstanding performers from our Prime Brokerage, Hedge Fund Administration, Private Equity Administration and Exchange-Traded Fund Administration surveys.

This year we will also be awarding two regional custody honours for North America and Latin America respectively, though the former will be revealed in due course as this year's relevant survey responses are still being validated.

In addition to the survey award shortlists, our Editors' Choice shortlists go beyond the results of our flagship surveys into the products, partnerships and milestones which bank-owned and independent firms alike have achieved over the past 12 months.

For more information on attending the event please visit our website or contact matt.aldred@globalcustodian.com or daljit.sokhi@globalcustodian.com.

EXCHANGE TRADED FUND ADMINISTRATION AWARDS

Exchange Traded Fund Administrator of the Year
Citi
JP Morgan
RBC
Ultimus Fund Solutions

Client Services
CIBC Mellon
JP Morgan
State Street
Ultimus Fund Solutions

Onboarding
CIBC Mellon
JP Morgan
Ultimus Fund Solutions
U.S. Bank

ETF Basket Services
CIBC Mellon
Citi
JP Morgan
Ultimus Fund Solutions

Fund Accounting
Citi
JP Morgan
RBC
Ultimus Fund Solutions

Reporting
Citi
HSBC
JP Morgan
RBC

Technology
CIBC Mellon
HSBC
RBC
Ultimus Fund Solutions

ETF Servicing Model
JP Morgan
RBC
State Street
Ultimus Fund Solutions

PRIME BROKERAGE AWARDS

Prime Broker of the Year
CIBC Capital Markets
Clear Street
Morgan Stanley
BNY Pershing

Capital Introductions
BNP Paribas
Clear Street
CIBC Capital Markets
Morgan Stanley

Client Service
Clear Street
Morgan Stanley
BNY Pershing
TD Securities

Consulting
CIBC Capital Markets
Clear Street
Morgan Stanley
BNY Pershing

Operations
Clear Street
CIBC Capital Markets
Morgan Stanley
BNY Pershing

Technology
Clear Street
CIBC Capital Markets
Morgan Stanley
BNY Pershing

Risk Management
BNP Paribas
Cantor
Morgan Stanley
BNY Pershing

Asset Servicing
BNP Paribas
Clear Street
Marex
BNY Pershing

PRIVATE EQUITY FUND ADMINISTRATION AWARDS

Private Equity Fund Administration of the Year
Artex Fund Services
CSC
SS&C
Ultimus LeverPoint

Client Services
Artex Fund Services
SS&C
Trident Trust
Ultimus LeverPoint

Relationship Management
Artex Fund Services
SS&C
Trident Trust
Ultimus LeverPoint

Reporting to GPs & LPs
Artex Fund Services
CSC
SS&C
Ultimus LeverPoint

Reporting to Regulators
CSC
SS&C
Trident Trust
Ultimus LeverPoint

HEDGE FUND ADMINISTRATION AWARDS

Hedge Fund Administration of the Year
Citco
Intertrust
Opus
Trident Trust

Client Service
Citco
Intertrust
Opus
Trident Trust

Relationship Management
Citco
Intertrust
Opus
U.S. Bank GFS

Fund Accounting
Citco
Intertrust
Opus
U.S. Bank GFS

Technology
Citco
Intertrust
Opus
SS&C

Reporting
Citco
Opus
SS&C
Trident Trust

AGENT BANKS AMERICAS AWARDS

Agent Bank of the Year – North America
BNY
Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation (MUFG)
UBS

Agent Bank of the Year – Latin America
BNP Paribas
Citi
Santander CACEIS

EDITORS' CHOICE

Fund Services Deal of the Year
BNY – BlackRock
Northern Trust – Sanlam Asset Management
SS&C – Investment Fund Services (Marlborough)
State Street – LGPS Central

Fund Services Acquisition of the Year
BNP Paribas – HSBC's Hedge Fund Administration business
BNY – Archer
Trident Trust – Tricor IAG Fund Administration Group
Vistra – Phoenix American

Best New Fund Services Project
Apex – Blockchain for Transfer Agency Services
Citco – Æxeo FailSafe
Gen II Fund Services – Sensr DataBridge
MUFG Investor Services – Digital Onboarding Initiative

Fund Services Partnership of the Year
Canoe Intelligence – Gen II Fund Services
Citi – Temenos Multifonds
FundGuard – ICE
Ocorian – Goji

Fund Services One to Watch
Alchelyst
NAV Fund Administration Group
Petra
Precision Fund Services
SGGG Fund Services

Fund Services Technology Provider of the Year
Canoe Intelligence
Fenergo
FundGuard
Temenos' Multifonds

ETF Initiative of the Year
BNY – Platform updates/New Basket Offering
State Street – Fund Connect Expansion
Citi – Dual access ETFs in Australia
JP Morgan – Development of API for Instruction Capture and Order Confirmation

Developing the infrastructure of the future for digital assets

An eventful 12 months have seen the industry make great strides in its efforts to create a regulated digital asset ecosystem for traditional market participants. Here, **Jack Pouderoyen**, who leads digital asset innovation for Swift, discusses the progress being made in scaling the tokenised securities market, and how Swift is working with its community to facilitate interoperability and turn these ambitions into reality.

How do you see the current state of the digital asset ecosystem for financial institutions?
The digital asset ecosystem is constantly evolving and is undergoing rapid development. In the past 12 months, there have been even more promising developments in the space, and lots to cover, so I'll just highlight a couple of trends we see as important.

The first is around institutional investment. Our working assumption is that the buy-side will continue to have an outsized role in shaping the market in the future as other market actors will look to serve them going forward. We've seen various surveys across the past year noting the increasing level of interest that institutional investors have in allocating money to digital assets and securities, for a variety of reasons. You can see from the number of market announcements that more buy-side institutions are beginning to test the tokenisation of funds on-chain.

The second concerns government interests. Global regulators are increasingly expressing a willingness to find ways to support the development of the ecosystem, albeit in a risk-managed way. Clear guidelines are emerging across jurisdictions as well as industry sandboxes like the UK's Digital Securities Sandbox, the EU DLT Pilot Regime, and initiatives like Project Guardian out of Singapore that are promoting public-private sector collaboration for real use cases.

These two trends together are driving an effort to build capabilities and competencies by institutions across the value chain.

Another aspect I would point out is that, to date, industry efforts have largely been focused on primary issuance, with less overall development and traction of secondary markets.

Finally, there's also a real demand for solutions that can be moved into production to commercialise and create real value for customers.

What are some of the barriers to adoption and what is holding back further scaling of the market today?
I think in the grand scheme it's still quite early for the market, and so there are several hurdles that have stood in the way of more meaningful adoption. Probably the most often cited point is around clear legislation and regulation, which is well covered, and moving in the right direction now.

In addition, the overall maturity of infrastructure is still relatively young. Many larger financial institutions have launched their own tokenisation platforms, but those use a range of different technologies and protocols, and they tend to focus on specific asset classes.

This infrastructure piece also pertains to connecting the cash leg, whether we're talking about on-chain formats, like CBDCs and tokenised deposits, or more traditional fiat rails. In any case, the risk here is that a range of siloed systems, or 'digital islands' form, resulting in a negative impact on market fragmentation and liquidity.

There also needs to be further development around common standards and market practices. This would cover both enhancing existing data standards, for example, ISO 15022 and ISO 20022, but also newer areas like smart contract and token standards which today experience a high degree of diversity

and can lead to operational challenges and compatibility issues when processing digital asset transactions.

The final point is to underline the need for players to ensure they develop very clear business cases to justify continued investment, given the fairly early stages of the market. Of course, there are clear exceptions to this, and we'll gradually see more niche use cases mature into commercial solutions. This does create a little bit of a chicken and egg problem because markets and actors need a mature and interoperable infrastructure for real business value to materialise.

Swift has long played an important role in connecting financial institutions to traditional markets. Can that role extend to the digital asset ecosystem and help address some of these barriers to adoption?

Swift's role for the past several decades has been to provide a global network and standardised communication between different platforms and actors across markets. Therefore, carrying forward this role to support and reach these emerging digital asset platforms or ledgers is a natural extension of the role Swift plays today.

On a technical level, we've proven that we can interlink different types of blockchain platforms and networks, whether that's emerging CBDC, digital asset, or trade networks, across a range of technologies including both permissioned and permissionless DLT platforms.

Our commitment to interoperability will also go a long way to ensuring that the risk of fragmentation, creating so-called 'digital islands' is mitigated. Over the past several years, our own experimentations, along with the community, have been to demonstrate our vision of facilitating interoperability between digital systems and traditional systems.

Beyond the technical elements, we've also worked with the community to introduce updates to existing standards that can support digital asset transactions. For example, by incorporating digital token identifiers, blockchain wallet addresses, or DLT-based places of settlement. This reflects Swift's role as a mobiliser of industry efforts in reaching harmonisation of common standards, such as ISO 20022. We believe this will pave the way for a unified, interoperable payments ecosystem, and set the stage for further innovations.

Ultimately, we believe our community should have the opportunity to reuse its existing investment and infrastructure, as they use to connect to Swift today. We want to create a single window that can support both digital and traditional asset flows going forward.

What does the future hold for Swift in this space?

Sibos 2024 is around the corner, and Swift is focused on building on the work we've done with the community over the past couple of years. Reflecting the industry's sentiment and feedback from our customers to move beyond proof of concepts (PoCs), we're working to enhance our existing infrastructure to be able to support real-world digital asset solutions.

For example, we have a clear focus on facilitating the orchestration of delivery-versus-payment (DVP) and payment-versus-payment (PVP) transactions between different networks and ledgers, over our existing network.

It's important to reinforce that Swift is not going to go about this alone; as a cooperative owned by the community, we're building for the community.

To get there, we're planning a set of targeted pilots with the community in 2025 that will - for the first time - move out of a sandbox environment towards trialling real-world transactions, allowing us to test and refine the development of that infrastructure with valued input from our members.

Additionally, you can expect us to continue our collaborative efforts on the development of standards necessary to support digital securities. There's more to come, so keep an eye out.

As a request to our community, please do get in touch with us. As we move forward, we continue to strongly encourage the spirit of collaboration and look forward to working even more closely with you.

NAVIGATING ASIA'S *complexity:*

Why local expertise remains crucial for custodians in an era of change

A follow up to our recent feature on how 'Asia's momentum points to golden age for asset servicers' **Sophia Thomson** spoke with Camilo Ramirez, managing director of financial markets and private banking at SIA Partners in Hong Kong, to explore the key drivers of growth, the rise of digital assets, regulatory complexity and the future of custody in Asia Pacific.

Much has been made of the opportunity for asset servicers in Asia Pacific, but as the market continues to grow custodians are being confronted with the challenge of operating in a region characterised by highly fragmented regulatory environments. Unlike the more unified frameworks in Europe or the US, Asia's regulations differ markedly from country to country, requiring deep local expertise and a strong on-the-ground presence.

Moreover, asset managers and owners in the APAC region often operate on a more localised basis, which necessitates that custodians provide adaptable and localised solutions. The need for a regional presence, rather than relying solely on hubs like Hong Kong, is becoming increasingly important for custodians aiming to cater to the diverse and growing markets within APAC.

"Custodians must develop strategies tailored to each market. This includes having local language capabilities, regulatory experts, and partnerships in place. It's essential for custodians to understand that a significant portion of assets are managed and invested locally," says Camilo Ramirez, managing director of Financial Markets and Private Banking at SIA Partners.

AUM growth in APAC

Looking at recent data from SIA Partners reveals a significant upward trend in AUM [assets under management] in the APAC region, with projections indicating a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 35%, from $15 trillion in 2018 to $30 trillion by 2027.

The data suggests that this growth in AUM is mirrored by a corresponding increase in assets under custody (AUC) in the region. Key custodians such as Deutsche Bank, State Street, HSBC and Citibank are key players in this growing market, and as AUM continues to rise, so will the market share of these custodians in APAC's custody sector.

The rapid AUM growth in the region is influenced by a range of socio-economic factors, and while much attention is often placed on China, the growth story extends far beyond – encompassing countries like India, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

"These countries are experiencing substantial corporate growth and accumulating assets. However, as these nations become less cost-efficient compared to emerging markets, new opportunities arise in other areas of the region," Ramirez notes.

This shift has opened new opportunities in other parts of the region. For instance, Malaysia's strategic location near China and West Asia is fuelling its rapid growth, while Indonesia

is transitioning from a primarily agricultural and mining economy to a hub for services. These developments are contributing to a broader regional expansion in wealth and trade, propelling AUM growth across the APAC landscape.

As we pointed out earlier this year, a growing middle-class and increased wealth generation has also resulted in increased inflows to products such as insurance, mutual funds, and unit trusts. Alternative investments have also gained traction in the region, with more and more investors putting their assets into private markets. All of this combined has created a melting pot of opportunities for investors and providers alike as clients looking to broaden their geographic reach are turning to their securities services providers to help facilitate that. What is unique about Asia is the distinct individuality you will find from one market to the next. Clients will look for partners who are attuned to those market nuances – whether that be from a regulatory, infrastructure or market trend standpoint.

The rise of digital asset custody

In addition to those established trends, Ramirez explains that digital assets have rapidly emerged as a significant area of interest for custodians in APAC. As traditional financial institutions start to explore opportunities in digital assets, including tokenised commodities and cryptocurrencies, custodians are evolving their systems and operating models to address these new asset classes.

"Traditional custodians, previously resistant to digital assets, are now exploring these opportunities. For instance, HSBC has ventured into tokenised gold, marking a shift towards embracing digital assets. The extent of adaptation often depends on how willing these institutions are to take on the risks associated with digital assets," Ramirez explains.

However, the degree of adoption varies widely depending on market readiness and risk appetite. Regulatory environments play a crucial role in shaping the extent of digital asset adoption in different markets. While China imposes stringent regulations on digital assets, making it challenging to establish a digital asset custody business, other markets like Hong Kong, Singapore, and India are more receptive. The Middle East is also emerging as an open market for digital assets – as evident by this week's news from Standard Chartered which launched a digital asset custody service in the UAE.

Custodians must strike a balance between their risk appetite and the local regulatory frameworks to navigate this evolving landscape. The key to success lies not in attempting to cover every aspect of digital assets, but in focusing on those that align with their strategic goals and market conditions.

Streamlining onboarding: the need for digital collaboration

Onboarding clients in the custody and securities services sector has traditionally been a manual and labour-intensive process, often involving extensive testing and troubleshooting. While compliance with local regulations is generally straightforward, managing the internal risk protocols during onboarding can be challenging.

Ramirez emphasises the importance

of digitisation in streamlining this process. "The key to streamlining this process lies in digitisation – not in the superficial sense, as one might see with retail clients, but in creating robust collaboration tools specifically designed for institutional onboarding," he says.

In Asia, industry players are now developing platforms that allow pre-onboarding collaboration, enabling organisations to share files, manage project timelines, and track issues using integrated ticketing systems. This approach minimises miscommunication and creates a more efficient, auditable process, making onboarding smoother and less complicated for both parties.

Challenges and opportunities of integrating sub-custodians

Integrating client-appointed sub-custodians into a global custodian's network presents both challenges and opportunities, particularly in APAC. Traditionally, global custodians have relied on strong relationships with local banks to provide comprehensive services.

This arrangement simplifies interactions for clients, allowing them to manage their investments globally through a single custodian. However, in Asia, where local asset ownership is significant, the global custodian's is at more of a disadvantage.

"In cases where clients have a mix of local and international investments, they might find it easier to work with a local custodian for the domestic portion while leveraging its global network for international investments," Ramirez explains.

"The challenge for global custodians in this region is that their lack of local presence can make it difficult to compete with local custodians which are better positioned to manage domestic assets."

To address these challenges, global custodians are advancing their technology and adopting models akin to open banking or custody-as-a-service, allowing them to partner with local custodians to provide a centralised platform for clients, even if the local servicing is handled by other entities.

While progress has been made, Rameriz argues that no player in Asia has yet perfected a model that offers the transparency and integration clients expect, leaving them to navigate multiple layers of service.

AI, VR, and beyond

While advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) hold significant potential for transforming custody services, their adoption has been slow in the sector. Ramirez attributes this gap to a combination of client needs and bank priorities, noting that custodians have traditionally taken a cautious approach to new technologies.

"Asset managers, asset owners, and other financial professionals predominantly use traditional office setups – laptops and desktops. Until there is a significant shift in how people work, such as broader adoption of AR/VR [virtual reality] workstations driven by certain firms, these technologies may not see widespread use in custody services.

Though, Ramirez notes that that some custodians in Asia are already leveraging AI to predict and manage trade failures, leading to more effective communication with clients and proactive measures to avoid issues.

While technologies like AR and VR may still be in the early stages of relevance for custody services, AI-driven solutions are gaining traction, driven by their practical benefits in enhancing operational efficiency and reducing the need for urgent problem-solving.

The future of custody in APAC

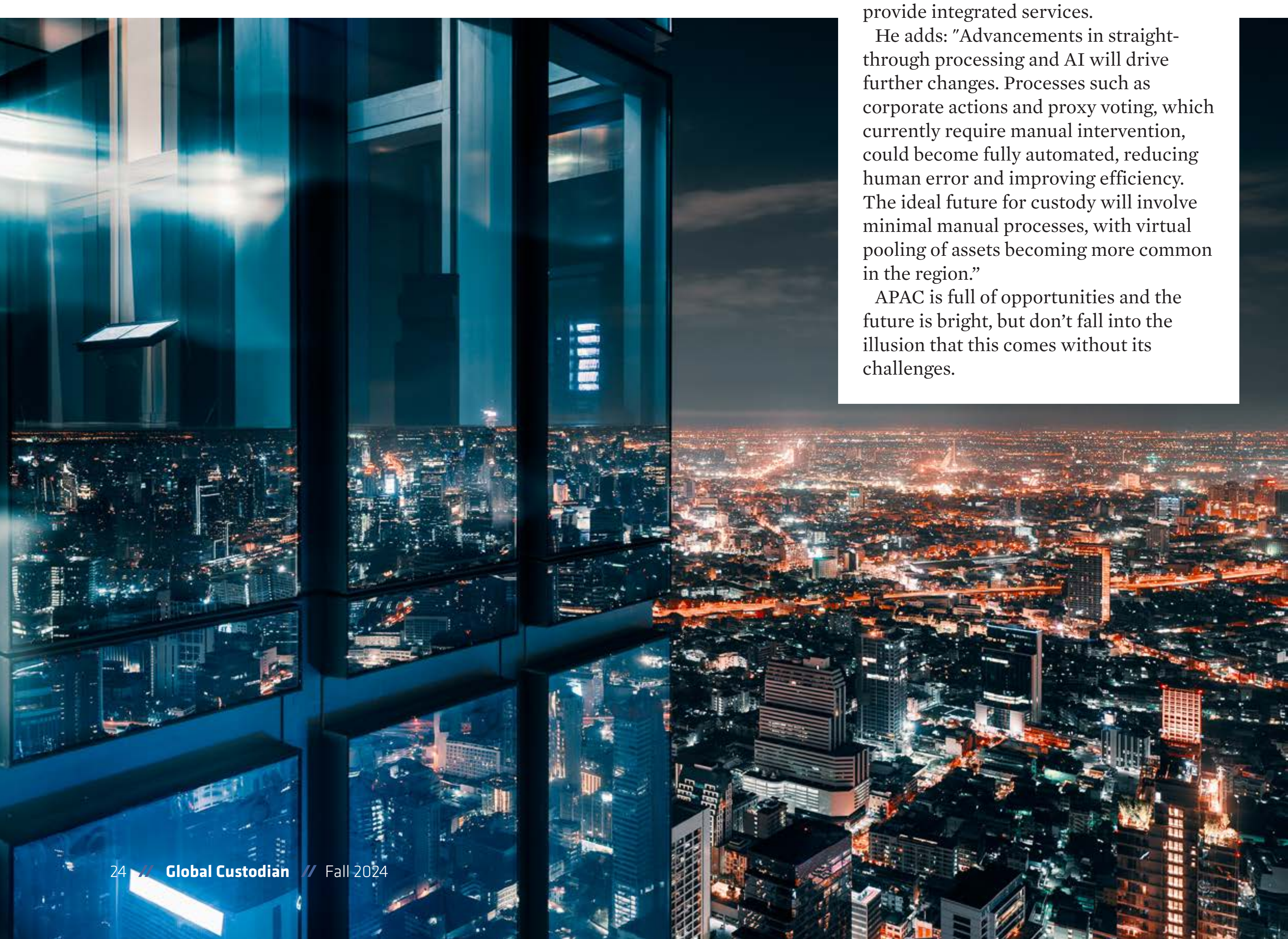
Looking ahead, the custody landscape in APAC is poised for significant transformation, driven by regional economic developments and technological advancements. While the region is unlikely to achieve the same level of integration as the Eurozone, the shift towards digital assets is expected to reshape the APAC market.

"We are already seeing this with the tokenisation of commodities and bonds, which means that assets can be serviced from anywhere, reducing the need for physical custody locations," Ramirez predicts.

Another trend that will shape the future of custody in APAC is the rise of white-label or open custody models. These models, where local banks partner with global custodians to offer branded custody services, allow global players to collaborate with local institutions and provide integrated services.

He adds: "Advancements in straight-through processing and AI will drive further changes. Processes such as corporate actions and proxy voting, which currently require manual intervention, could become fully automated, reducing human error and improving efficiency. The ideal future for custody will involve minimal manual processes, with virtual pooling of assets becoming more common in the region."

APAC is full of opportunities and the future is bright, but don't fall into the illusion that this comes without its challenges.

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Openness and innovation: The key to ICBC's steady growth

A dedicated strategy of digitalisation, backed by scientific and technological research, has placed the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) in the vanguard of innovation within the global custody sphere.

The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) continues to solidify its position as a leader in the custody sector, and seeks to capitalise on the historic opportunity created by the opening of China's capital markets.

Applying the service philosophy of "accompanying you all the way with comprehensive and considerate services" with the spirit of openness and innovation, the bank's custody business has reached new heights.

At the end of August 2024, ICBC Group's assets under custody exceeded RMB26.7 trillion, maintaining the lead in the Chinese custody industry for a 26th consecutive year. During that time, the unit has received no fewer than 102 awards from renowned media and institutions, both domestically and internationally.

As one of the first commercial banks in China to engage in global custody business, ICBC has always been committed to providing the highest possible service to clients – providing global asset management institutions with cross-border custody services.

The bank's service portfolio includes multilateral organisations, sovereign funds, central banks, insurance companies, and pension funds, alongside prominent asset management firms. By the end of August 2024, the bank's cross-border assets under custody approached RMB2 trillion, serving nearly 300 international clients.

The bank's global custody network now supports various international investment schemes, including the Qualified Foreign Investor (QFI), Qualified Foreign Limited Partnership (QFLP), Bond Connect (Southbound),

R/QDII, QDLP, and depository receipts. ICBC's contribution to cross-border capital flow has been instrumental in supporting clients in navigating diverse global investment opportunities.

Innovation and professionalism are at the core of ICBC's growth in the sector. The bank prides itself on being the first in China to offer depositary services for Chinese Depositary Receipts (CDRs) and Global Depositary Receipts (GDRs), further consolidating its pioneering role in fostering international capital market integration. Moreover, ICBC has successfully managed custody for landmark investment products, including China-Japan ETF Connect, Shenzhen-Hong Kong ETF Connect, and Bond Connect (Southbound). It also continues to be at the forefront of the QFLP and QDLP business, expanding investment options for overseas investors.

ICBC also sits within the vanguard of scientific and technological development within the custody industry. Independent research and development contribute to the bank's offering, promoting innovation and digital transformation through the D-ICBC initiative. Digitalisation has now rolled out to the full product lifecycle, including creation, fundraising, investment, management and exiting for every type of client.

Through a dedicated strategy of digitalisation and research, ICBC has built a faster and more efficient global custody offering, which in turn has contributed to the creation of a more dynamic and more efficient global financial ecosystem.

Can the Capital Markets Union save Europe from mediocrity?

A disparate and fragmented European Union is thwarting the continent's ability to compete effectively with the largest markets in the world. But a new political impetus has reinvigorated the consolidation agenda, with a view to challenging national frameworks and bringing growth back to the region. **Chris Lemmon** reports.

The EU has a problem. It's falling behind. Growth has been largely stagnant across the continent for the last two decades, with a wide number of metrics pointing to an ever-increasing investment and growth gap with the US.

The recently-published *EU competitiveness* report, penned by former prime minister of Italy Mario Draghi, is the latest in a long line of research projects that has shone a spotlight on the EU capital markets, reaching a similar conclusion to those gone before it: things need to change. If the EU wishes to be a competitive force on the global stage, there has to be a fundamental rethink of how the bloc operates.

At the heart of the problem is the fact that the EU is not a favourable location for a company to scale and compete effectively with their US (and now Chinese) counterparts. The Draghi report points out that only four of the world's top 50 tech companies are European, while there isn't a single EU company with a market capitalisation over €100 billion that has been established in the last 50 years.

Consequentially and simultaneously, the landscape for investors in the region is equally tricky. A key problem, for organisations and investors alike, is the muddled patchwork of rules and regulations across the continent, forged independently over centuries, which they must manoeuvre through to operate effectively.

So, the question now for the EU decision-makers is: how do you make the EU competitive again? The current plan is the Capital Markets Union (CMU): a flagship initiative designed to boost investment, enhance access to finance, enable cross-border investment, and reduce the fragmentation of Europe's financial markets.

Sounds great, right? The problem though, is that the CMU has struggled to gain traction throughout the member states since its ideation in 2014. The lumbering, 27-pronged consortium is burdened with a deep-rooted inertia as consensus on policy and legislation can often be so hard to come by. Combine this with a rising nationalistic sentiment sweeping through the region, driving a further wedge between the EU and its harmonisation goals, and it is becomes abundantly clear that change won't be easy.

But 10 years on, the political impetus surrounding the CMU seems to be reinvigorated. The string of damning reports appears to have awoken the beast, with government ministers and institutions across the continent coming forward with plans to kickstart Europe's new age.

"The race is on and I want Europe to switch gear," said Ursula von der Leyen, upon successfully securing a second mandate as European Commission President in July.

Making a more hospitable environment

To unlock those opportunities for growth and to boost investor power in the region, there needs to be a simplification of the disparate systems that exist within the EU.

"It is not that Europe does not have the cash and investment potential. It is about market attractiveness for local and international investors."

SAM RILEY, CEO, CLEARSTREAM

"If you have 25 to 30 smaller places that operate independent of one another – this can be in Europe or anywhere else – the liquidity and interoperability associated between jurisdictions becomes limited," explained Okan Pekin, head of securities services at Citi, at a recent AFME conference. "As a result, even if the investors want to bring in hundreds of billions of dollars of capital, getting in and out will become problematic because of frictional costs. So, by virtue of your market structures, you are impeding investor attractiveness."

Take withholding tax, for example. Each country within the bloc has their own

detrimental impact on the post-trade landscape, which faces its own fragmentation problems. To unlock those opportunities for growth and to boost investor power in the region, a harmonised post-trade landscape must form the bedrock on which other initiatives can sit. Without a smooth and efficient post-trade environment, the CMU risks stagnation as fragmented systems will continue to stifle market access and growth.

"When you look at some of the post-trade processes, there is still a significant amount of scope for harmonisation, for allowing much more effective cross-border provision for Europe to move closer together."

BEN POTT, INTERNATIONAL HEAD OF PUBLIC POLICY AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, BNY

proach to the reliefs and refunds process, which are often complex, burdensome procedures that can actually serve as a deterrent for cross-border investment – particularly for individual and small investors. In some cases, the process takes years.

Another pertinent example is the provision of depositary services, where there is currently no passporting service available to asset servicers in the EU. "[This is] close to our heart as a provider of depositary services," says Ben Pott, international head of public policy and government affairs at BNY. "You cannot provide cross-border depositary services under UCITS or AIFMD – which, when you talk about a unified Capital Markets Union, is a big miss."

Insolvency laws, pension schemes, corporate actions, shareholder rights, securities laws – the list goes on. For Europe to become an attractive place for investors and issuers, the EU must tackle these regulatory divergences head on.

"It is not that Europe does not have the cash and investment potential," says Sam Riley, CEO of Clearstream. "It is about market attractiveness for local and international investors."

Harmonised post-trade as the bedrock for growth

The disparate frameworks also have a

"We have said for a long time that when you look at some of the post-trade processes, there is still a significant amount of scope for harmonisation, for allowing much more effective cross-border provision for Europe to move closer together," says Pott. "Historically when you look at the integration of investment services, there is a lot that has happened on the execution side, and not as much on the post-trade side."

The Draghi report calls for a centralisation of clearing and settlement systems, with a single central counterparty platform (CCP) and a single central securities depositary (CSD) – but the acquisition and integration of 27 CSDs and 14 CCPs is an unrealistic, expensive and time-consuming task. Instead, a focus on strategic partnerships and interoperability would likely yield faster results.

As Riley, points out, over 90% of settlement activity within the EU is processed at three institutions. "That's the reality," he says. "We and the two other main CSDs in Europe have already progressed in providing consistency and harmonisation across platforms and processes. That naturally leads to consolidation.

"The challenge is determining what the top priorities for capital markets harmonisation are. What can we realistically achieve? Competition is good; it is healthy. It drives service quality, innovation and efficiency. Eliminating competition would not be a good idea, as it would limit investor choice."

While progress has undoubtedly been slow-moving, there is a clear desire to bolster harmonisation across the post-trade landscape. Connectivity upgrades to the T2S are due to be rolled out next year, while the CSDR refit will enable the possibility of closer collaboration between CSDs.

Another notable success has been the integration of Euroclear Bank as the domestic CSD in Ireland. Following Brexit, the Irish market agreed that the asset protection framework on domestic securities would be governed by Belgian law, with Euroclear Bank now serving as the CSD for Irish securities. As pointed out in Euroclear's *Unlocking scale and competitiveness in Europe's market* report, the example shows that full CSD consolidation is possible and could serve as the basis for similar efforts in other countries, but it "requires the support of market participants and national authorities".

The problem is that initiatives often encounter the same national barriers impacting regulatory alignment, as Pablo Portgual, senior director, public affairs at Euroclear, described at the AFME conference: "Some countries, for national security reasons, have a big problem with outsourcing, and that effectively prevents the creation of synergies between infrastructures."

Next steps

With the political motivations seemingly in the right place, and the key areas identified to boost harmonisation, the next step is to put the plan into action – which may be easier said than done.

The rising tide of nationalism in Europe is placing increased pressures on domestic governments to take more inward-looking approaches when it comes to policy. The age of globalisation is grinding to a halt, with the European collective set to suffer as a result.

"People want to have their cake and eat it," explained Pekin. "They want interoperability, they want union, they want integration – but also, nobody wants to give up anything from their national sovereignty agendas. So how do you square that circle? If you want a Capital Markets Union, you want no barriers, you want the single CSD – you may never get there in our lifetime. So, the next question becomes: what can you do in the meantime? You can start with interoperability; you can start with data – it's a critical point."

Therein lies the challenge for the EU. Policy makers and country leaders need to try and get those wheels turning again, and instil within these local governments a belief that a more consolidated Europe would bear fruit to all participants.

"Convincing is the word, and that is our daily business," said Marcel Haag, director of horizontal policies at the European Commission, at the AFME event. "We are engaging with member states and we hear them out and we exchange arguments. A lot of member states will say, 'our priority is to grow our national market' or 'we are on the periphery, we have an underdeveloped capital market'. We have to engage, assess the pros and the cons, and let's see how we can accommodate their concerns."

While some are eager to ensure an aligned approach across the 27 countries, others are not so patient. Talk of a breakaway coalition within the EU has picked up pace in recent months, with Spain's minister for the economy, Carlos Cuerpo, outlining proposals to the Financial Times in October for a new mechanism that would allow three or more countries to proceed on joint initiatives without the inclusion of other member states.

On such a project, Haag said: "EU law allows for this under certain conditions. Of course, the Commission's role is not to divide and create different leagues, but to unite and create a united Europe. Solutions that would allow a smaller group of member states to go forward faster, that for us is always the second best option."

A '28th regime'

A separate proposal – set out in the Draghi report – recommends the establishment of a "28th regime", whereby a special legal framework is created outside of the 27 different legal frameworks with a view to shortening the length of national procedures and integrating them into a single process.

"It's a really interesting piece, which is gaining traction," says Pott. "Rather than saying to member states, you have to all conform to a single system and we're going to do away with the existing 27, you say to businesses that want to adopt the 28th regime that they can move in that direction.

"It might work better in some areas than others," he continues. "For taxation, it won't work so well because business is still bound by its local taxation rules. But when you think about insolvency rules, for example, which was one of those intractable areas where it's very difficult to move beyond the national insolvency provisions that exist, having a 28th regime that firms could opt into, would be a helpful alternative and maybe overcome some of those national sensitivities of giving up or doing away with national systems."

"I hope the political momentum and spotlight that we have in Europe at the moment can help us provide the right context to drive change."

PABLO PORTUGAL, SENIOR DIRECTOR, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, EUROCLEAR

How ever the bloc plans to move forward, it's important to get the ball rolling as soon as possible. The gap between Europe and the US is only widening – a 2023 report from the European Centre for International Political Economy found that the gap between US GDP per capita and EU GDP per capita rose from 47% in 2010 to 82% in 2021.

Harmonised tax and investment frameworks, and a unified post-trade environment are not just a technical necessity; they are the foundation upon which a successful Capital Markets Union can be built, enabling Europe's capital markets to thrive on the global stage.

"I hope the political momentum and spotlight that we have in Europe at the moment can help us provide the right context to drive change," said Portugal. "A lot depends on the market and on FMIs collaborating with their clients and with the ecosystem to deliver that call for more integration, more efficiency and cost reduction."

Yes, the project is vast and the road will be long, but the EU and the financial services industry has the opportunity to spearhead something great in Europe. It's time to make it happen.

CONNECTING MARKETS: The strategic role of RBI's Group Prime Services

Bridging East and West, RBI's Group Prime Services navigates the complexities of the global investment landscape. In this interview, **Christian Geberth**, head of Group Prime Services, and Elitza Kavrakova, head of Institutional Clients, discuss how their innovative solutions and advanced technologies, combined with extensive local market knowledge, create sustainable value and exceptional experiences for clients.

You often talk about the bridging function that RBI or Group Prime Services stands for. What do you mean by that?
Christian Geberth: Group Prime Services (GPS) provides broker-to-custody solutions for clients investing in various asset classes on a global basis. As such, we are ideally placed to act as a bridge between different regions, specifically between East and West and vice versa. We are the infrastructure for Austrian and Eastern European investors to invest in global asset classes and likewise for international investors to invest in specific Eastern European assets.

Our USP is our specific knowledge of the related local environment in Eastern Europe, our direct connectivity to local market infrastructure and our excellent relationships with the international investment world.

What exactly characterises GPS and what specific solutions and innovations do you offer your customers?
CG: Our deep understanding of local specifics in Central Eastern Europe (CEE) sets us apart; we have helped build these markets and understand the needs of local clients. We also maintain excellent connectivity with major institutional players and local infrastructure, creating sustainable business and macroeconomic value.

Although not the largest global player in asset services, we ensure efficiency and modernisation with our innovative e2e model, implemented three years ago. This framework unites business, operations, and IT in an agile tribe. We've achieved double-digit efficiency gains, reduced operational risk, and modernised our platform, significantly improving customer satisfaction and acquiring new mandates through our team's combined expertise.

What is the value chain from brokerage to custody at GPS and what are the advantages of integrating brokerage and custody at RBI?
CG: Our Brokerage 2 Custody platform serves as a modern and efficient gateway to the investment product universe. In practice, this means a one-stop-shop concept starting from execution to safekeeping services – with a fully-fledged asset servicing offer (including comprehensive tax services), which – depending on the client type and needs – can also include the full range of depository bank and fund administration services.

Our GPS experts provide our customers with a profound understanding of their needs, in-depth market and process knowledge and services that span the entire value chain. This allows our clients to focus on their core competencies and needs in selecting appropriate investment opportunities. We take care of the rest.

How do you see custody as a gateway to fixed income investments and the broker-to-custody model?
Elitza Kavrakova: Custody offers an excellent opportunity from a coverage perspective to think about and offer a product bundle, e.g. making it easier for clients and meeting their needs out of one hand - with the ability to buy securities through our capital markets desk and use the broker-to-custody service; one service provider offering excellency alongside the entire value chain.

What is the role of ESG in the CEE market and how is it addressed by GPS?
EK: The CEE market is very diverse in terms of ESG, depending on which region or country we look at and the size of the financial player. Institutional clients in EU countries in CEE are more advanced in their approach to sustainability than others, but the awareness of the topic and

the need to act is growing.

As a leading bank in ESG in our core markets, of CEE we understand well the different needs of our clients, depending on where they are in their own ESG journey – we see the so-called newcomers, we know the transitioners and we observe financial players that I can classify as advanced in the topic.

Depending on this positioning, we are able to support our clients in their own ESG growth and transition with different types of services – from regulatory and ESG consultancy, via fixed income & ESG research and ESG scoring database for portfolio analysis, to green trade finance and green / sustainable wholesale funding in the debt capital markets.

Where have you seen an increased interest in the GPS offering from CEE countries recently? How does GPS collaborate with Ukrainian financial institutions, and what are the key benefits for Ukrainian and international clients of your custodial services?

EK: Interest in GPS products is growing with local capital market development, particularly in Southeastern Europe (SEE), the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Our direct links to local central securities depositories (CSDs) are appreciated by Western investors looking to invest in new growth markets.

In this context, I would like to highlight Ukraine. We service a large part of the local banking sector from our subsidiary in Kyiv and from Vienna. All state-owned and large private banks are our valued partners, and we help them maintain strategic imports into the country with our trade finance and cash management services, in the area of capital markets, and also with our GPS products. We were able to support our Ukrainian customers with the latter in particular last year, and I am very pleased about that.

Furthermore, we contribute substantially to maintaining the local market infrastructure throughout the war and are ready to support international investments into the market. These will be crucial to rebuild the country – hopefully in the very near future.

What are GPS's long-term strategies to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of its securities services?

CG: Our strategy is based on four pillars. Investing in product excellence, continuously optimising our operations and processes, modernising our technology platform and fostering modern collaboration through our agile e2e tribe. Ultimately, our goal is to offer superior client experience as an efficient and modern gateway for our existing and new clients.

How do you see the future development of the CEE financial sector, and what role does GPS play in this?

EK: I share the view of our Raiffeisen Research, which maintains a constructive view of Central Europe (CE) and SEE as an integral part of the European banking market. I see a potential for local banks to grow and for foreign banks to help recalibrate global value chains, especially as CE/SEE countries attract international investors. Geopolitical shifts are prompting Western banks to favor stable EU markets.

CG: By acting as a gateway between East and West, supporting the investment product needs of different client segments ranging from institutional, corporate, and retail clients, GPS plays a significant role in supporting the further development of the finance universe in the region. I truly believe that banks play an important role in the macro-economic development of our society and our product and service catalogue is an essential part of the financial infrastructure.

Both Elitza and Christian will be available to discuss these insights and more at this year's SIBOS conference at the RBI booth.

WHICH MARKET WILL BE THE NEXT T+1 DOMINO TO FALL?

The US move to T+1 sparked a global domino effect, with markets globally now evaluating their own transition timelines. While the US somewhat provided a blueprint, each decision is unique. This feature delves into the lessons learned and what the shift means for the UK, EU, Switzerland and APAC markets - those who could be next up. **Sophia Thomson** reports.

The global transition to T+1 settlement is well underway, but this shift isn't a one-size-fits-all journey. Each market is moving at its own pace, facing unique challenges along the way.

When the US completed its transition to T+1 in May, the rest of the world took notice. It sparked inevitable discussions on roadmaps, timelines and co-ordination from Europe to Asia.

Although the move was largely successful, representatives from other markets are as quick to point out jurisdictional differences as they are to pinpoint the successes. In Europe for example, the journey is uniquely complex because of the sheer number of systems and different infrastructure minutiaes involved.

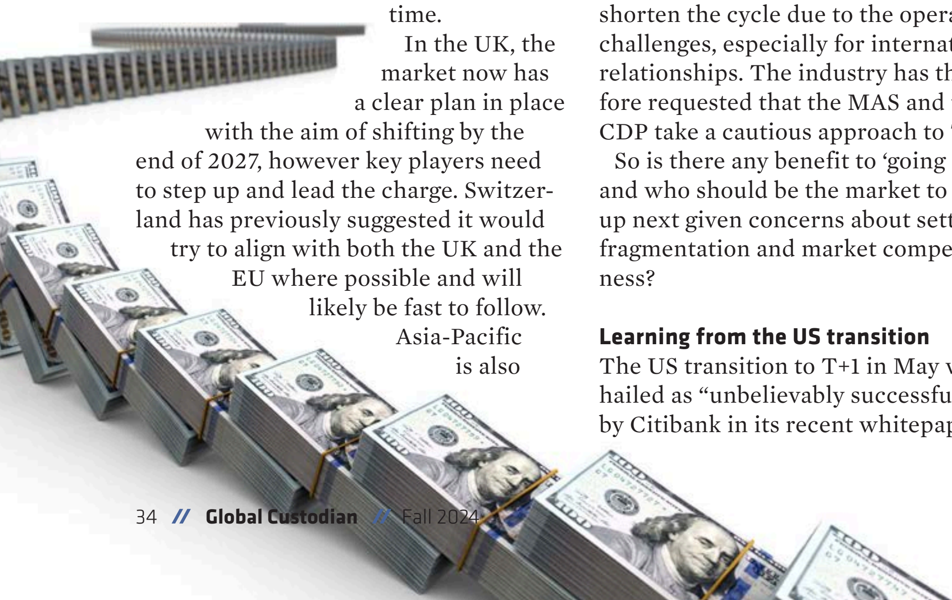
At the time of writing, EU regulators and the bloc's taskforce seemed to have aligned on urgency and co-ordination with the rest of Europe, after being relatively silent on the matter for some time.

In the UK, the market now has a clear plan in place with the aim of shifting by the end of 2027, however key players need to step up and lead the charge. Switzerland has previously suggested it would try to align with both the UK and the EU where possible and will likely be fast to follow.

Asia-Pacific is also diving into discussions, with Australia at the fore. However, their transition depends on upgrading their existing systems first - a challenge that many other markets will likely face.

In regard to Singapore, a recent BNP Paribas briefing note said the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) had reached out to the Central Depository (CDP) to understand the views of custodians on the market adopting a T+1 settlement cycle. BNP Paribas noted that post-trade participants are not keen to shorten the cycle due to the operational challenges, especially for international relationships. The industry has therefore requested that the MAS and the CDP take a cautious approach to T+1.

So is there any benefit to 'going next' and who should be the market to step up next given concerns about settlement fragmentation and market competitiveness?



Learning from the US transition

The US transition to T+1 in May was hailed as "unbelievably successful" by Citibank in its recent whitepaper – while one of its executives also referred to the transition being seen as a "blueprint" going forward – but it was the result of years of preparation, and not an overnight success.

"The US move to T+1 worked well because there was just one time zone (ET) to consider. The challenge will be when Europe and the UK follow suit, as their time zones don't align," says Val Wotton, managing director and general manager at the DTCC.

Another valuable takeaway, emphasised by Pardeep Cassells, head of client experience at AccessFintech, is how the UK T+1 Settlement Taskforce is addressing areas that the US shift overlooked.

"I really like what the Accelerated Settlement Taskforce are doing," Cassells notes.

"They're chipping through facets of the peripheral impact that the US change refused to consider. And when I say US, I mean North America sweepingly, because it was the same for all the markets that moved.

"The US didn't really focus on securities lending; they didn't focus on FX at

"The number one priority for all the actors involved should be making the transition a success without rushing just because other countries have moved to a compressed cycle."

SILVIA SANCIN, SENIOR CUSTODY SOLUTIONS MANAGER, BNP PARIBAS

all, and have left the current FX timeframe in situ. Taking longer to enact a T+1 change, but using that time to ensure that due credence is given to all of the peripheral processes, feels to me like the right thing to do."

The Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA) played a key role in establishing a command centre during the US go-live, as it provided a central place to address any issues or concerns and to communicate important messages. Wotton highlights this, and stresses that the UK and EU markets need to do the same in addition to prioritising communication and automation.

The latter emerged as a critical step for firms making the T+1 transition in the US. This was less of an issue in the US, and it was more of a case of international participants turning to automation, something which could stand them in good stead for their own domestic changes.

"Firms used the US transition to T+1 as an opportunity to automate," Wotton explains.

"We often focus on settlement at the CSD level, but it's crucial to get everything right post-execution." For asset managers, completing block allocations as quickly as possible to move them downstream is key.

However, the US experience wasn't without its challenges. Wotton warns that without a clear regulatory mandate, firms will struggle to secure funding, particularly for back-office improvements.

He also points out that many operations remain stuck in outdated practices, with some still relying on fax messages, adding: "It's ironic to hear people discuss AI, machine learning, and DLT when faxes are still in use."

Will the UK be next?

The UK stands out with a strong transition plan; but there are still details to be ironed out.

As Andrew Douglas, chair of the UK T+1 Taskforce Technical Group, points out: “Moving to T+1 is about finding the right balance between being ready and ensuring we’re not rushing into a migration that carries significant risks.”

This is of course crucial. A coordinated and deliberate approach is essential in order for it to work, ensuring that the market is prepared and not hurried into rushed or risky migrations.

The UK's Accelerated Settlement Taskforce (AST) in September released a roadmap for T+1 transition, outlining 43 key recommendations on settlement processes, static data, and corporate actions. The UK aims to migrate by Q4 2027 with a well-thought-out approach.

Douglas explains, “We’ve chosen our timeline carefully to ensure readiness while avoiding the significant risks of rushing this transition.”

While the careful strategy outlines a guide to success for the UK, Sonal Meghani, FI segment and regional strategist, securities services, BNP Paribas highlights the other side of the coin: the potential misalignment with the EU, especially regarding exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and dual-listed securities.

“The US didn't really focus on securities lending; they didn't focus on FX at all and have left the current FX timeframe in situ.”

PARDEEP CASSELLS, HEAD OF CLIENT EXPERIENCE, ACCESSFINTECH

For the UK, there is a number of dual-listed securities with various jurisdictions, each with different asset servicing and tax rules.

“To capture any possible impacts like record date, ex-date impacts (a late theme in the US), all scenarios would need to be confirmed before the fact for UK move,” says Meghani. “Although the UK can leverage lessons learned from the US, the US and UK are very different markets, and a simple copy and paste will not suffice.”

To ensure a smooth transition, the UK must consider the effects on all stakeholders. Meghani adds: “Only by doing this, can the UK ensure a smooth and efficient transition that enhances market stability and operational effectiveness.”

What about Europe?

Europe's most obvious challenge lies in the fragmentation of its financial markets, in stark contrast to the US which had a single CSD to facilitate the streamlined coordination.

Unlike the US and UK, Europe’s financial landscape is highly fragmented, with over 20 currencies, 22 central securities depositories (CSDs), 18 central counterparties (CCPs), and numerous exchanges and regulatory bodies, making a unified waltz to T+1 quite complex.

Silvia Sancin, senior custody solutions manager at BNP Paribas, explains that no market in Europe is significantly more prepared than another, making regional coordination essential for a successful transition. The priority for Europe is not speed, but ensuring the transition is smooth and coordinated.

"The number one priority for all the actors involved should be making the transition a success without rushing just because other countries have moved to a compressed cycle," says Sancin.

European CSDs and international CSDs (ICSDs) will play an important role in this shift; collaboration with other market infrastructures will be crucial, especially as the operational requirements and product scope for T+1 is still being defined by European authorities.

The pan-European platform T2S will also play a significant part in streamlining settlements across jurisdictions, explains Sancin.

The challenge for Europe

"The challenge will be getting these CSDs to collectively agree on new cutoff times or other market changes, which requires a much higher degree of collaboration between CSDs and regulators," asserts Wotton.

Sancin continues: "Governance needs to be defined. Who will play in Europe the key role that DTCC had for the US market?" This raises the crucial question of establishing a central authority to facilitate the transition, ensuring fairness across EU markets.

In Europe, CSDs are regulated by national competent authorities (NCAs), while ESMA oversees broader market dynamics - creating a much more complex environment. Unlike in the US, where firms used the transition to T+1 as a chance to streamline and automate, Europe's many moving parts make coordination a tougher challenge.

Wotton underscores the importance of taking the necessary time for a well-planned transition, while Sancin adds: "A rushed transition could be detrimental to EU efficiency and competitiveness for years to come, not favouring investors at all."

A unified European taskforce has been deemed key to steer the transition effectively. While the UK and Switzerland align more closely with the US model, Europe's unique challenges demand careful planning and collaboration.

Just moments before we went to press, the taskforce voiced support for a co-ordinated move to T+1 in the EU, acknowledging the benefits of an aligned approach across the entire European region, including the EEA, the UK and Switzerland.

The taskforce stated that this followed a range of views being expressed as to whether the date identified for the UK transition, H2 2027, could also be a feasible implementation date for the EU.

The taskforce did, however, emphasise that depending on the exact definition of what regulatory, technical and operational changes will be required, a transition period of between 24 and 36 months will be required to accommodate the complexity of the market infrastructure in Europe.

This could most likely come through an amendment to CSDR which would mandate a harmonised shortening of the

"Although the UK can leverage lessons learned from the US, the US and UK are very different markets, and a simple copy and paste will not suffice."

SONAL MEGHANI, FI SEGMENT AND REGIONAL STRATEGIST, SECURITIES SERVICES, BNP PARIBAS

settlement cycle in the EU.

In addition, the taskforce recommended added that public authorities should avoid implementing complex changes to the CSDR cash penalty rules in advance of the transition to T+1.

Elsewhere, the taskforce stated that ESMA should consult as planned on "measures to reduce settlement fails" and make a determination as to whether further regulatory changes are necessary to support enhanced settlement efficiency, and which of these changes, if any, should be sequenced before a move to T+1.

Better together?

With regards to the UK and EU aligning, Meghani is optimistic, saying, "There are hopes that the UK can have a co-ordinated plan with the EU and Switzerland which will be an outcome that can support market stability, whilst also allowing firms to use collective resources to deliver such a change."

He stresses that the UK and EU should put in place a governance to be able to assess whether having a coordinated approach makes sense, which might not be the same thing as moving together at the same time.

"It's ironic to hear people discuss AI, machine learning, and DLT when faxes are still in use."

VAL WOTTON, MANAGING DIRECTOR AND GENERAL MANAGER, DTCC

"If EU jurisdictions decide to move to T+1 closer to 2027, when the UK also plans to transition, this could significantly impact readiness. The US faced similar challenges as many neighbouring markets decided to move very close to the go-live date," says Meghani. Canada and Mexico aligned their T+1 transitions with the US to maintain market consistency, while Brazil and Peru followed shortly after.

On the flip side, Douglas gives a different response about the UK's position, responding to speculation about the UK's alignment with the EU.

"This isn't about us aligning with the EU. We've made our decision to move in Q4 2027," said Douglas at a conference at the start of Q3.

"The question is whether the EU can move in the same timeframe. We've chosen this date to strike a balance – being ready without rushing into a migration that could bring significant risks."

Douglas stressed that careful planning is essential to avoid the potential pitfalls of halving the settlement time, such as skyrocketing costs or failed implementation.

"While there's no reward for getting it right, there are definitely penalties for getting it wrong," he said. The UK's strategy, in his view, is neither too slow nor too hasty - just the right pace to ensure success.

"While there's no reward for getting it right, there are definitely penalties for getting it wrong."

ANDREW DOUGLAS, CHAIR OF THE UK T+1 TASKFORCE TECHNICAL GROUP

Final thoughts

If we assume transition dates will be somewhere towards the end of 2027, there is no reason for firms to not start preparing now.

"Let's avoid a last-minute rush and instead focus on becoming as efficient as possible today," said Wotton.

"For the UK and Europe, there's no reason to delay investment and automation. The move to T+1 is coming, so let's embrace the change and start investing in automation now."

Securing early investment is important, suggesting that a phased approach could help the UK and Europe transition smoothly, allowing firms to adjust gradually instead of facing a sudden overhaul.

"This would enable firms to make progress and monitor their readiness, reducing the pressure of a 'big bang' transition like the one we saw in the US," added Wotton.

"We can't afford to kick the can down the road."

Why financial market infrastructures must be at the heart of increased market connectivity

Javier Hernani, head of securities services at SIX, stresses the need for greater connectivity within the securities services ecosystem, at a time when new technologies and innovations are changing the status quo.

It's hard to remember a Sibos where connectedness of markets was not a central theme of the annual blue ribboned event of the securities services industry. The growth of markets globally is, in large part, a result of greater economic opportunity in markets beyond the domestic, facilitated by connectivity between markets and market participants.

As we come together once again to discuss the pressing themes for our industry, there are a number of challenges and opportunities in securities services where greater connectivity must be prioritised, with the financial market infrastructures (FMI) playing a central role.

European settlement

Since Sibos 2023, we have witnessed a huge shift in the securities landscape. The much-anticipated move to T+1 settlement in the United States, together with other countries, has come and gone. Despite all the warnings, the transition appears to have gone smoothly. Now everyone is looking at the move to T+1 in Europe.

The challenge is, aligning settlement will not be so simple. We have multiple market structures, multiple currencies and increasing regulatory fragmentation, following the UK's departure from the European Union. Alignment between the main three market regions of Europe – the EU, Switzerland and the UK – is a must in order to create harmony in European markets.

To achieve this, we must see greater connectivity between the different markets, reducing the frictions to trade and settle across the European continent. Local market infrastructures are vital to accompany financial institutions in their quest for competitiveness in a globalised economy, but building bridges between these pillars is crucial. But it is not a question of a post-trade monopoly, it must be a network of connected infrastructures.

Going global

Looking beyond Europe, there is a lot to be excited about. Despite some structural challenges, the interconnectivity of markets and capital is becoming deeper, aided by the growth in assets in emerging markets and investment from the APAC investors in markets around the world. While the desire of investors to seek new opportunities elsewhere is what drives the movement of capital between regions, it is the market infrastructures that make it a reality.

We have seen this very recently with growing interest from the APAC region in the custody and market access services provided by SIX. For example, SIX was able to support many Asian market participants navigate the move to T+1 providing them with connectivity to US markets and supporting core asset servicing functions, such as corporate actions processing, in the new T+1 timeframe.

As global economic conditions, the regulatory and liquidity landscape fluctuates, market participants around the world need access to far flung markets with high quality service to mitigate the potential pitfalls.

Bridging traditional and new

The definition of connectedness is changing, as technology evolves at a rapid pace. As is clear at this year's

Sibos, connectivity increasingly hinges on technological innovation. Barring a major shock that destabilises the global order and disrupts the technology that binds us together, technology can continue to bring markets closer together while also delivering new efficiencies.

Nowhere is this more obvious than in the world of digital assets and the underlying digital ledger technology. Great progress is being made with DLT, as central banks across the world trial central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) which have the potential to transform the way we work. However, there is still a long way to go.

We should expect market participants to operate with a growing mix of digital and traditional assets. Operating both in an efficient way while retaining the flexibility between the two worlds requires connectivity between the different structures. SIX has been at the forefront of this innovation with the SIX Digital Exchange, which is connected to our leading international CSD, providing market participants with the ability to move assets between the two worlds.

The role of an FMI

So, exciting developments are ahead of us in the financial markets. To ensure these changes are implemented smoothly we must be on the front foot, retaining the strong bonds of connectivity in markets today and enabling new forms of connectivity between emerging assets and markets.

In making this a reality, the role of an FMI has never been more important. No longer confined to the plumbing of domestic markets, FMIs are at the cutting edge of technological innovation with global presence, providing the foundations for continued success. The role of SIX and our peers working collaboratively together with the market and regulators will ensure the smooth functioning of markets and new opportunities are realised.

The 2024 GC 35 YEARS AGENT BANKS IN MAJOR MARKETS **SURVEY**

THIRD TIME'S ANOTHER CHARM

For the third year in a row the overall Agent Banks in Major Markets score has increased, along with most of the individual categories, pointing to a real purple patch for the sub-custody industry in the eyes of their clients.

What a year it has been for the Agent Banks in Major Markets survey – pulling in a record number of respondents on both the provider and client side.

In fact, between 2022 and 2023 every single category experienced an uptick in ratings, and this year paints a similar story with all bar one category registering an increase. The exception here was Securities Lending, and even then the decline was only a marginal fall of 0.01.

Account Management saw the largest uptick in ratings, increasing by 25 basis points, followed by Client Service (up 23 basis points) - which incidentally saw the largest rise in ratings in 2022. Relationship Management (6.15) has the highest score once again, although this year it has shifted into the Very Good range, up 32 basis points.

The high ratings for Client Service and Relationship Management suggest that the providers in this report are in tune with what their clients are looking for.

When asked to rate our categories in list of priorities, overwhelmingly respondents reported that Client Service and Relationship Management were of paramount importance. Interestingly, Account Management registered the third highest rating and given that this category has seen the largest annual shift, the future appears to be bright for our providers.

Over the next few pages, you will find our report broken down by region, country and then finally the multi-market section. On the final few pages, we have collected each market, region and global score, along with any provider in that market and placed them all in a summary table, allowing for a quick glance at this year's results.

You will see plenty of mentions of T+1 throughout the survey, an inescapable reality for all major markets – whether they have already reduced their settlement time, or are in the process of considering a chance.

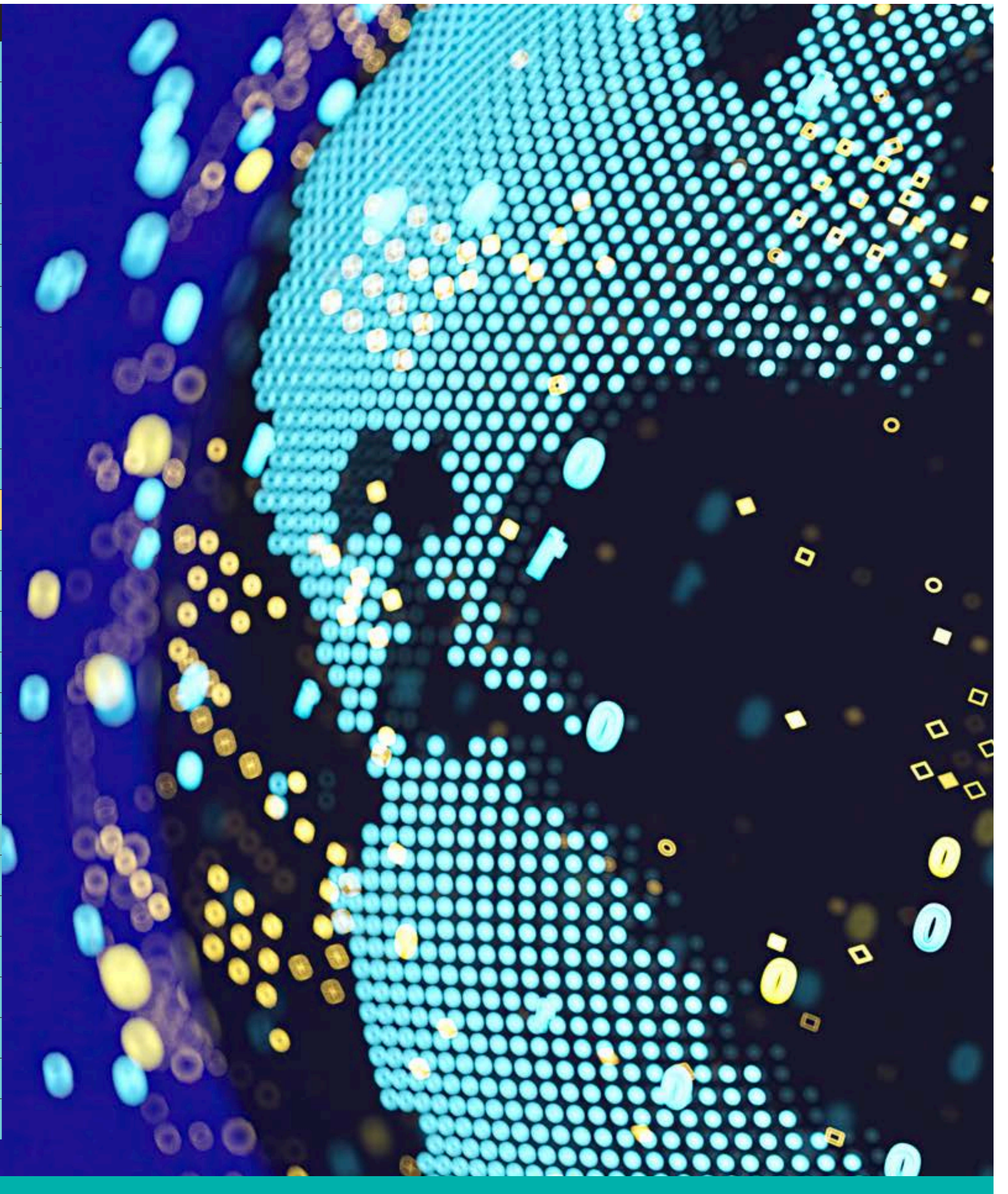
We do hope you like our new layout, and as always, would love to hear your feedback on our latest Agent Banks in Major Markets survey. For now, we hope you find the rest of the report interesting and informative.

Happy reading,
GC Research

	Client Preference
1st	Client Service
2nd	Relationship Management
3rd	Account Management
4th	Asset Servicing
5th	Pricing
6th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
7th	Regulation and Compliance
8th	Cash Management and FX
9th	Technology
10th	Liquidity Management
11th	Data Services
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

	2024	2023	2022	Difference 2024 - 2023
Account Management	5.83	5.58	5.48	0.25
Asset Safety and risk management	5.73	5.59	5.36	0.14
Asset Servicing	5.59	5.43	5.20	0.16
Cash Management and FX	5.46	5.28	5.15	0.18
Client Service	5.84	5.61	5.36	0.23
Data Services	5.44	5.39	5.24	0.05
Service Innovation	5.43	5.28	5.24	0.15
Liquidity Management	5.41	5.23	5.14	0.18
Pricing	5.20	5.09	4.91	0.11
Regulation and Compliance	5.57	5.48	5.31	0.09
Relationship Management	6.15	5.83	5.78	0.32
Securities Lending	5.17	5.18	5.02	-0.01
Technology	5.33	5.27	5.19	0.06
Average	5.55	5.40	5.26	0.15

Countries Ranked by Overall Average	
Japan	6.39
ICSD	6.06
Korea	5.81
Switzerland	5.68
Singapore	5.66
Canada	5.58
Hong Kong	5.57
Germany	5.49
Belgium	5.48
Spain	5.47
Italy	5.47
Average	5.44
Denmark	5.42
Finland	5.40
Sweden	5.38
Norway	5.37
Netherlands	5.34
France	5.34
USA	5.31
New Zealand	5.30
Luxembourg	5.19
Portugal	5.18
Australia	5.16
UK	5.15
Ireland	5.11
Austria	5.11
Israel	5.01



Methodology

Methodology The Global Custodian Agent Bank Surveys are designed to elicit the views and perceptions of cross-border investors about the post-trade services they receive in markets around the world.

They have been conducted annually since 1989. The Agent Banks in Major Markets (ABMM) Survey focuses primarily on those markets categorised as developed by MSCI and S&P. We invite network managers and operations executives from leading global custodians, correspondent banks, brokers, infrastructure providers and asset managers to evaluate the performance of their agent banks.

The response pool is drawn from two sources. Those respondents who completed the survey in the previous year are invited to do so again, while service providers in the markets concerned are invited either to submit client lists for invitation or to approach those clients themselves. Service providers are given controlled access to a back-end system to allow them to validate that the ratings they have received come from bona fide clients. Any responses submitted by institutions that were not clients of the rated provider in the 12 months under review are removed. At the end of the collection process, Global Custodian does its own check to filter out duplicates. Completed online, the questionnaire included 13 service categories. A scorecard allowed respondents to rate each category on a sevenpoint scale from Unacceptable to Excellent. All subsequent questions were optional, allowing for supportive comment to explain rating decisions.

A minimum of 10 responses was required for a country rating to be published and eight responses for an individual provider rating. Responses to the rating questions were converted by the survey system into numbers and weighted. Service providers were also invited to complete a short questionnaire, aimed at allowing us to better understand market and provider changes that might impact results. Based on the data collected, more granular analyses than we are able to publish in the magazine are available. For more information on our Research Plus range of analysis products, please contact **beenish.hussain@globalcustodian.com**.

North America

The top story in North America has of course been the successful transition to T+1 settlement in May 2024, an achievement that has been watched across the globe, with many markets looking to follow in the upcoming years. Many single markets can take lessons from North America's experience, while others with more complex decisions – like the EU – are having to establish their own blueprint. Regardless, the accomplishment of North America reducing its settlement cycle with few issues reported - as of yet - has largely been put down to the work which went into the transition and the support from custodians over the critical first four weeks.

In a GC roundtable conducted during the first month of the transition, participants compared the introduction of T+1 to that of Y2K, with the industry fearing the worst. However, ultimately it would seem this overcautious approach has paid off. As reported by Global Custodian's editorial team, "after just a few months of intense focus on the transition and various War Rooms and Command Centres being in place, some experts have even pointed to benefits stemming from the transition – as opposed to just coping".

Of course, it isn't just T+1 that has been grabbing headlines in North America. Regulatory changes have been taken place especially in Canada, with Canada's self-regulatory organisation (SRO) proposed rule changes looking to strengthen regulation of retail fully paid securities lending programmes with the goal of formalising investor protection measures, clarify requirements, and accommodate various lending models and client types. In the US, the SEC has been on an unwavering war path of introducing transparency into every aspect of the securities space as possible – while the introduction of a revised Custody rule still looms over the industry. However, at the time of writing it does appear this will be scaled back somewhat.

With all these changes, the North American regional market has still seen an overall uptick in scores, increasing 14 basis points to 5.38 (Good). With a wide range of scores, each category sits within the Good range (5.00 – 5.99).

Relationship Management (5.94) has the highest score, however when looking at the list of client priorities, Client Service is considered to be the most important to our respondents.

Pricing has seen the largest uptick in rating since 2023 – increasing by 0.39. This category now sits in the Good range.

	Respondent Priorities
1st	Client Service
2nd	Relationship Management
3rd	Account Management
4th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
5th	Asset Servicing
6th	Pricing
7th	Regulation and Compliance
8th	Cash Management and FX
9th	Technology
10th	Liquidity Management
11th	Data Services
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

North America	2024	2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.60	5.34	5.83	-0.23
Asset Safety and risk management	5.58	5.49	5.73	-0.15
Asset Servicing	5.46	5.26	5.59	-0.13
Cash Management and FX	5.28	5.08	5.46	-0.18
Client Service	5.56	5.34	5.84	-0.27
Data Services	5.08	5.13	5.44	-0.36
Service Innovation	5.21	5.13	5.43	-0.22
Liquidity Management	5.14	5.00	5.41	-0.27
Pricing	5.33	4.94	5.20	0.12
Regulation and Compliance	5.48	5.30	5.57	-0.08
Relationship Management	5.94	5.64	6.15	-0.21
Securities Lending	5.09	5.21	5.17	-0.08
Technology	5.14	5.19	5.33	-0.19
Average	5.38	5.23	5.55	-0.17

GC 35 YEARS

Industry Leaders *Awards*

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Canada

Canada now operates within a T+1 settlement window, in line with its North American counterparts. One of Canada's leading providers CIBC Mellon highlighted how the shortening of the settlement cycle "reflected a concerted effort to align with global best practices and standards".

Much of the success has been attributed to custodians like CIBC, along with industry associations and, of course, the infrastructures driving the transition.

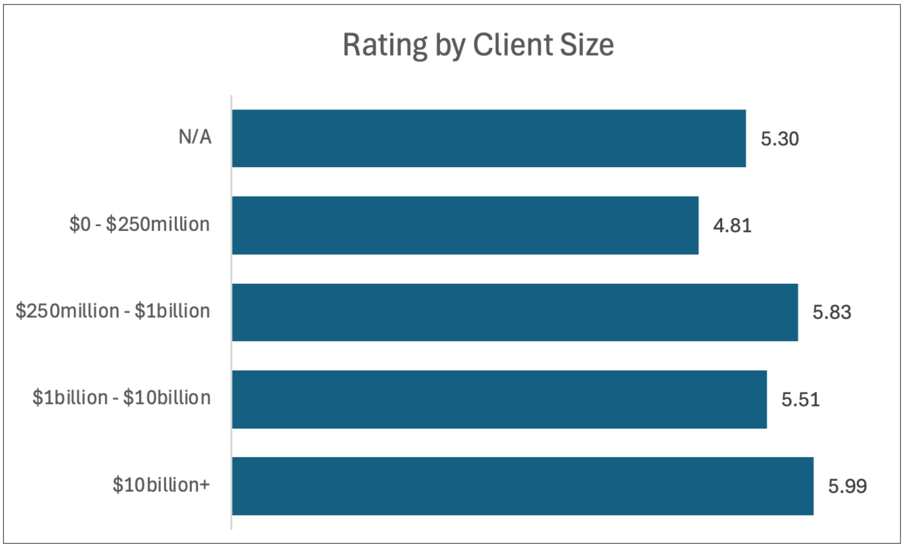
While T+1 has been the hot topic throughout the financial sector, Canada has also seen the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organisation (CIRO) proposing significant amendments to the short selling framework under UMIR back at the beginning of 2024. Then in February 2024, CIRO proposed revisions to securities lending regulations in Canada, looking to tackle issues regarding disclosure, collateral rules, asset use, record-keeping, and audit provisions.

CIBC comments that "Canada remains a complex market with numerous regulatory bodies and evolving requirements for participants".

Despite the market upheaval, Canadian providers still scored higher than the global average in this year's survey and have seen a significant improvement from their 2023 score. Securities Lending (5.63) beat the global average by 46 basis points, while Relationship Management (6.35) received the highest rating – with a string of positive comments accompanying the score.

Following on from the successful adoption of T+1, there is more technological advancements on the horizon for the market. CIBC Mellon reported that it is "in the midst of a multi-year programme to modernise its technology across the spectrum of its products and services" which includes, but not limited to, converting the GSP custody platform to enhance cash and securities capabilities to support both the business and its clients. Of course, CIBC Mellon is not the only provider in Canada making waves when it comes to Technology, while UBS also scoring highly in the category.

As CIBC Mellon commented, it is "pleased to champion Canada's innovative market environment and players on the global stage".

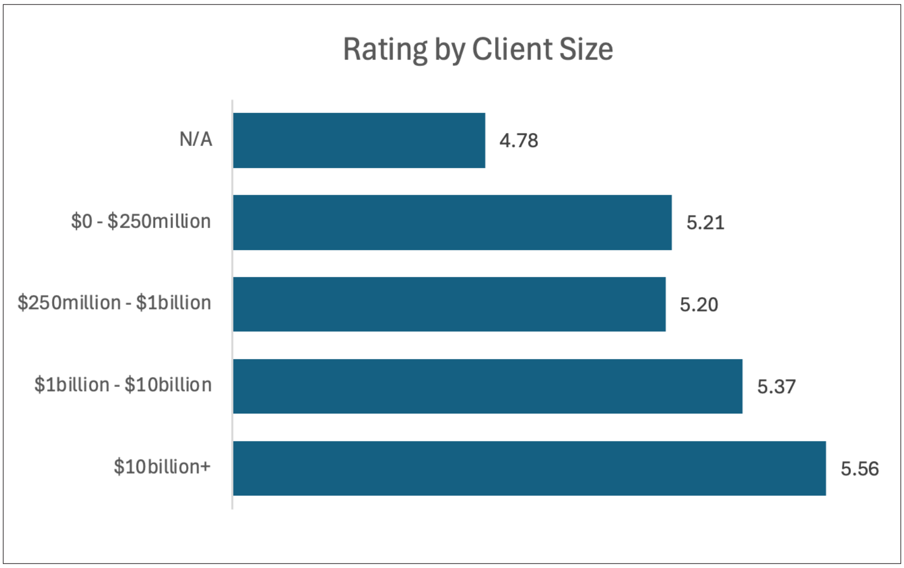


Canada	Canada 2024	Canada 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	6.08	4.97	5.83	0.25
Asset Safety and risk management	5.68	5.15	5.73	-0.05
Asset Servicing	5.67	4.96	5.59	0.08
Cash Management and FX	5.54	4.70	5.46	0.07
Client Service	5.89	5.00	5.84	0.05
Data Services	5.21	4.91	5.44	-0.23
Service Innovation	5.08	4.77	5.43	-0.35
Liquidity Management	5.46	4.83	5.41	0.05
Pricing	5.15	4.61	5.20	-0.05
Regulation and Compliance	5.79	4.96	5.57	0.22
Relationship Management	6.35	5.43	6.15	0.20
Securities Lending	5.63	5.20	5.17	0.46
Technology	4.98	4.85	5.33	-0.34
Average	5.58	4.95	5.55	0.03

United States

At the risk of repetition, it would be impossible to mention the US in our Agent Banks in Major Markets survey without mentioning the successful transition to T+1. A hot topic of conversation throughout 2024, the success over the last few months will undoubtedly see a knock-on effect around the world. As one panel member commented in a recent GC roundtable, when it came to T+1: "Everybody was afraid that everything was going to fall and therefore I think everybody over prepared for the worst, we really went deep dive into every single process, every single step, ensuring everything was done properly in case something was happening."

In this year's survey, the country still sits comfortably at Good in its overall score. In fact, the US has seen a rise in scores in consecutive years now, jumping from 4.91 in 2022 rising to 5.17 in 2023, while this year's overall average comes in at 5.38.



BNY

BNY has seen a significant improvement from last year with its score up by 58 basis points. Among a field of improved scores, the Pricing category registered the largest year-on-year increase for the bank, with an uptick of 1.20.

Only one category has seen a downward trend – Asset Safety and Risk Management – though still sits within the Good range. One client left constructive feedback for the bank, requesting an improvement in the speed in which the custodian responds to clients' emails.

It would be remiss of us not to mention the fact that BNY recently hit the milestone of $50 trillion in assets under custody and administration, a remarkable feat driven by a range of landmark deals in recent years.

Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation (MUFG)

Pricing is once again that has seen the largest uptick in ratings this year for MUFG. Rated as Good by clients, the bank has been referred to as "excellent"

USA	USA 2024	USA 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.40	5.53	5.83	-0.43
Asset Safety and risk management	5.54	5.64	5.73	-0.19
Asset Servicing	5.36	5.40	5.59	-0.24
Cash Management and FX	5.17	5.25	5.46	-0.29
Client Service	5.43	5.49	5.84	-0.41
Data Services	5.03	5.23	5.44	-0.41
Service Innovation	5.27	5.28	5.43	-0.16
Liquidity Management	5.03	5.10	5.41	-0.38
Pricing	5.41	5.11	5.20	0.21
Regulation and Compliance	5.36	5.45	5.57	-0.21
Relationship Management	5.76	6.50	6.15	-0.39
Securities Lending	5.02	4.25	5.17	-0.15
Technology	5.20	5.43	5.33	-0.12
Average	5.31	5.39	5.55	-0.24

and "very good" by respondents. Asset Servicing (5.70) received the highest score, with accompanying comments commending the bank for ″reliably providing trading accuracy and reporting".

MUFG explains to us: "We pride ourselves on being able to provide top level client service providing white glove service to our clients as the main differentiating factor from our competitors". It would seem that clients agree, with one respondent commenting: "MUFG's client service team is excellent, as mentioned before, my experience is positive. They are responsive, informative, patient with guidance and professional."

BNY	MUFG	UBS
5.43	5.56	5.56
5.27	5.56	5.42
5.57	5.70	5.46
5.09	5.48	5.12
5.57	5.23	5.71
5.43	5.15	5.10
5.43	4.85	5.43
4.83	4.88	5.12
5.83	5.31	5.40
5.43	4.72	5.37
6.03	5.21	6.29
5.33	4.50	5.00
5.43	4.77	5.18
5.44	5.15	5.40

UBS

UBS has joined the US providers this year, making its first appearance in our Agent Banks in Major Markets survey in this jurisdiction. With an average score of 5.40, UBS beats the global average when it comes to Pricing (5.40) and Relationship Management (6.29).

It's "approachable" stance on pricing seems to be paying off, with clients quick to praise the provider.

Relationship Management is where this provider truly shines. This category received the highest score, with one respondent expressing a desire for "a long-lasting and fruitful relationship" with UBS. Another notes the "great assistance" provided by the bank and a high level of satisfaction with how the relationship is managed by provider in this market.

Across the board, it has been a strong entrance for UBS, with every category rated as Good or higher. "I think our long-standing relationship works well and I hope it continues for many years to come," concludes one client.

Western Europe

	Respondent Priorities
1st	Client Service
2nd	Relationship Management
3rd	Account Management
4th	Asset Servicing
5th	Pricing
6th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
7th	Regulation and Compliance
8th	Technology
9th	Cash Management and FX
10th	Liquidity Management
11th	Data services
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

Western Europe is without doubt our largest region covered in the Agent Banks in Major Markets survey. Combining both continental European countries as well as the UK and Ireland, this region has numerous providers present here.

With an overall rating of Good (5.44) this region has seen a slight increase since 2023 (up 0.03) however excitingly over half of all category scores have seen an uptick in the last 12 months too. Most notable is Relationship Management (6.14) which improved by 24 basis points and has received the highest score this year. It is also the only category to sit in the Very Good range (6.00 – 6.99).

Of course, when discussing Western Europe it would be impossible to ignore the one provider who's presence is felt in nearly every market. BNP Paribas is a recurring presence throughout this section of the report, only not included in the Ireland and Luxembourg section. With an overall regional rating of 5.46, BNP sits just above the regional average although this provider outperforms the regional average in the majority of categories.

When it comes to client priorities, it is Client Service and Relationship Management which are considered most important. Given that Relationship Management has seen the largest increase and Client Service has the second highest score after Relationship Management it would seem that our providers in Western Europe are doing something right.

	2024	2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.69	5.58	5.83	-0.14
Asset Safety and risk management	5.65	5.57	5.73	-0.08
Asset Servicing	5.53	5.43	5.59	-0.07
Cash Management and FX	5.34	5.25	5.46	-0.12
Client Service	5.74	5.65	5.84	-0.10
Data services	5.39	5.42	5.44	-0.05
Service Innovation	5.30	5.26	5.43	-0.14
Liquidity Management	5.34	5.24	5.41	-0.07
Pricing	5.07	5.09	5.20	-0.13
Regulation and Compliance	5.42	5.47	5.57	-0.14
Relationship Management	6.14	5.91	6.15	-0.01
Securities Lending	4.99	5.20	5.17	-0.18
Technology	5.15	5.24	5.33	-0.18
Average	5.44	5.41	5.55	-0.11

Austria

Since the beginning of 2024, the Austrian stock market, Vienna Stock Exchange Austrian Traded Index, has seen a steady increase, growing 5.07% (at the time of writing). When it comes to the sub-custody market, in December 2023 the major news emanating from the country was that BNP Paribas is being selected by Goldman Sachs to provide custody and settlement services to its assets in Austria.

Taking a closer look at the data, there has been a downward shift in the overall rating this year, with the average score falling 17 basis points to 5.11 (Good). The largest decline was seen in the Secuirites Lending category, which fell 0.65 year-on-year to 4.35. On the flip side, Asset Safety has seen the largest uptick in rating, jumping 10 basis points on last year's score to reach 5.48.

BNP Paribas

For BNP Paribas, Asset Safety and Risk Management (6.04) has the highest score, and has seen quite the uptick, increasing by 40 basis points from the previous year. Unlike the Austrian market as a whole, BNP Paribas's scores all sit within the Good and Very Good range, with the exception of Securities Lending (4.33). It should be noted that BNP Paribas has seen a slight drop in overall rating from 2023. The bank's overall average rating (5.35), however, still sits well above the market overall average (5.11).

Austria	Austria 2024	Austria 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP
Account Management	5.43	5.59	5.83	-0.39	5.98
Asset Safety and risk management	5.48	5.38	5.73	-0.24	6.04
Asset Servicing	5.32	5.35	5.59	-0.27	5.31
Cash Management and FX	4.99	5.07	5.46	-0.47	5.09
Client Service	5.54	5.54	5.84	-0.30	5.78
Data Services	4.95	5.27	5.44	-0.49	5.27
Service Innovation	4.85	5.07	5.43	-0.58	5.10
Liquidity Management	4.89	5.17	5.41	-0.52	5.33
Pricing	4.92	5.03	5.20	-0.28	5.09
Regulation and Compliance	5.17	5.38	5.57	-0.40	5.27
Relationship Management	5.72	5.80	6.15	-0.43	5.96
Securities Lending	4.35	5.00	5.17	-0.82	4.33
Technology	4.79	4.96	5.33	-0.53	4.96
Average	5.11	5.28	5.55	-0.44	5.35

Belgium

In January 2024 the European Issuance Service (EIS) programme was launched, allowing the European Commission to issue debt issued into the National Bank of Belgium Securities Settlement System (NBB-SSS). By May 2024, it was reported that over €50 billion was outstanding.

In collaboration with the local banking association, the Belgian paying agents have been working on the standardisation of the proxy voting instructions.

The market as a whole has remained steady from 2023, with an overall rating of Good by respondents. This score has seen a slight shift of 0.05 decimal places over the last 12 months.

BNP Paribas

In line with the market average, BNP Paribas has seen a slight increase in its overall rating (up 0.03) and sits comfortably within the Good range. The headline figure of the year concerns Securities Lending (5.46), which has seen a notable uptick of 56 basis points.

This may come as little surprise, given the custodian's launch of its Agency Securities Lending platform, which was introduced last year. Client Service (5.72) has seen a 0.38 drop in rating, despite one client commending the "excellent support before and during implementation of CSDR" as well as how the client service team offers "ongoing support with fast turnaround to queries".

Intesa Sanpaolo

An improvement in the number of respondents has this year earned Intesa Sanpaolo a full write-up. With an average overall score of 5.78, all of Intesa Sanpaolo's scores sit within the Good and Very Good range, and more importantly – all bar one category (Liquidity Management 5.20) has beaten the global average. It is Account Management and Relationship Management, both at 6.24, which have received the highest scores. Clients are quick to praise the provider, especially for its responsiveness, mentioned by numerous respondents, who generally seem very happy with the service provided by Intesa Sanpaolo.

Belgium	Belgium 2024	Belgium 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP	Intesa
Account Management	5.64	5.63	5.83	-0.18	5.73	6.24
Asset Safety and risk management	5.61	5.68	5.73	-0.11	5.76	5.76
Asset Servicing	5.50	5.42	5.59	-0.09	5.52	5.94
Cash Management and FX	5.37	5.25	5.46	-0.10	5.56	5.68
Client Service	5.68	5.76	5.84	-0.16	5.72	5.94
Data Services	5.47	5.46	5.44	0.04	5.72	5.67
Service Innovation	5.31	5.25	5.43	-0.12	5.45	5.50
Liquidity Management	5.49	5.31	5.41	0.07	5.86	5.20
Pricing	5.02	5.04	5.20	-0.18	4.91	5.38
Regulation and Compliance	5.45	5.51	5.57	-0.12	5.50	5.76
Relationship Management	5.97	5.94	6.15	-0.18	6.03	6.24
Securities Lending	5.41	5.05	5.17	0.24	5.46	6.00
Technology	5.28	5.26	5.33	-0.04	5.36	5.88
Average	5.48	5.43	5.55	-0.07	5.58	5.78

France

Last November, Euronext has completed the expansion of the Euronext Clearing offering to cash markets in France.

Looking forward, by September 2024, it will be the new default CCP for listed derivatives for Euronext Clearing. Additionally, following the recent success of T+1 in North America, the EU is subsequently weighing up its own move. While the decision will be made by the European Commission it has been reported that AMF and Banque de France are in discussions to assess its impact on operational efficiency and whether it would enhance market competitiveness and attractiveness to investors.

The overall average for the French market has increased by 0.12 and sits within the Good range. Relationship Management (5.94), which sits just below Very Good, saw the largest increase year-on-year, up 29 basis points.

BNP Paribas

While BNP Paribas has this year topped the French average (5.34), a commendable score of 5.50 was not quite enough to beat the 2024 global average (5.55). The custodian's scores sit mostly in the Good range. Of course, the drop in the Client Service score (down 0.34) should be highlighted, however, this category is still rated 5.75 (Good). With the launch of NeoLink, this score could bounce back with an uptick next year. Securities Lending has seen the largest uptick – up 28 basis points, moving this category into the Good range.

Intesa Sanpaolo

For 2024, Intesa Sanpaolo scored within the Very Good or Good range for every category. Account Management, Client Service, and Relationship Management were the bank's top-performing categories – each with a score of 6.27.

Securities Lending, at 6.00, was the provider's most improved score from 2023, up an impressive 67 basis points. Unfortunately, due to a relatively low number of additional comments, more colour cannot be provided around the notable shift in rating.

France	France 2024	France 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP	Intesa
Account Management	5.59	5.37	5.83	-0.24	5.86	6.24
Asset Safety and risk management	5.54	5.39	5.73	-0.18	5.87	5.76
Asset Servicing	5.46	5.28	5.59	-0.13	5.59	5.94
Cash Management and FX	5.20	5.09	5.46	-0.27	5.41	5.68
Client Service	5.59	5.50	5.84	-0.24	5.75	6.24
Data Services	5.28	5.23	5.44	-0.16	5.58	5.67
Service Innovation	5.26	5.04	5.43	-0.18	5.36	5.50
Liquidity Management	5.09	5.07	5.41	-0.32	5.38	5.20
Pricing	4.91	4.93	5.20	-0.29	4.92	5.38
Regulation and Compliance	5.30	5.27	5.57	-0.27	5.34	5.76
Relationship Management	5.94	5.65	6.15	-0.21	5.89	6.24
Securities Lending	5.02	4.96	5.17	-0.15	5.17	6.00
Technology	5.19	5.06	5.33	-0.13	5.33	5.88
Average	5.34	5.22	5.55	-0.21	5.50	5.81

Germany

In Germany, the Electronic Securities Act was adapted at the end of 2023, to allow the issuance of registered equities onto a DLT. Meanwhile, the 2021 German Act on the Modernisation of the Relief of Withholding Taxes and the Certification of Capital Gains Tax has been amended to introduce a new Tax Reporting Regime, which will mandatorily apply to German Withholding Tax Agents in April 2025 for all German dividend payments. The aim of which is to introduce full transparency of tax withheld on dividend payments, along the chain of custody, and to avoid over-refunding by the German Tax Authorities.

Taking a look at the data, Germany sits within the Good category for a second year running, with an increase of 12 basis points to reach 5.49. Overall, almost every category saw an uptick in rating. Relationship Management experienced the most impressive shift, jumping up 47 basis points to 6.35.

BNP Paribas

In line with the German average, all but one of BNP Paribas' scores sit at Good. The exception, Asset Safety and Risk Management, scored 6.10 to sit within the Very Good range. This category has not only received the highest score, but also seen the largest uptick in rating over the last 12 months. Many respondents report an "excellent service" received from the bank, while another added that "BNP makes us more than aware of any market alerts and how to resolve these".

There has also been a drop in rating for some categories. Most notable is Securities Lending (5.16) falling 84 basis points.

One client acknowledged the difficult market conditions of the past year, which may have impacted the bank's scores.

Deutsche Bank

The headline news for Deutsche Bank in Germany is that every category has seen a significant improvement in its score from last year. Even the smallest shift, seen in the Asset Servicing category, jumped by 0.47. One client was particularly impressed by the "excellent management of assets and events".

Relationship Management (6.47) saw the largest uptick, up 105 basis points, with clients using words such as "perfect" and "excellent" to describe the Deutsche

Germany	Germany 2024	Germany 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.67	5.49	5.83	-0.16
Asset Safety and risk management	5.73	5.48	5.73	0.00
Asset Servicing	5.59	5.37	5.59	0.00
Cash Management and FX	5.38	5.25	5.46	-0.09
Client Service	5.76	5.58	5.84	-0.08
Data Services	5.51	5.32	5.44	0.07
Service Innovation	5.33	5.28	5.43	-0.11
Liquidity Management	5.41	5.30	5.41	0.00
Pricing	5.16	5.15	5.20	-0.05
Regulation and Compliance	5.45	5.43	5.57	-0.12
Relationship Management	6.35	5.88	6.15	0.20
Securities Lending	4.86	5.16	5.17	-0.31
Technology	5.13	5.17	5.33	-0.20
Average	5.49	5.37	5.55	-0.06

Bank team. One respondent commended a "relationship manager with many years of experience and deep professional knowledge".

Intesa Sanpaolo

With an average score of 5.87 (Good), Intesa Sanpaolo has several categories sitting in the Very Good range (6.00-6.99). Relationship Management and Data Services have received the highest scores, both rated 6.16 by its clients. One particular comment described the service received as "excellent from all points of view".

Interestingly, unlike many of the other providers in this region, Securities Lending (6.00) has seen the largest upward trend since 2023. Improving by 42 basis points, this category has just reached the Very Good range. It is worth noting that Client Services (5.92) and Asset Safety and Risk Management (5.64) have seen declines in rating this year, both falling 0.42 decimal places. However, both still sitting comfortably in the top end of the Good range.

"Intesa Sanpaolo provides a great service by attentively listening to our concerns and resolving issues efficiently," noted one happy client.

UBS

The majority of UBS's scores sit between 5.00 and 5.99, with the majority seeing an uptick on last year.

Overall, almost every other category has seen an uptick in ratings. Cash Management and FX has seen the most significant uptick, increasing 46 basis points to score 5.71, while Account Management has increased by 41 basis points to reach 5.84. When it comes to the highest score, it is Relationship Management which takes the crown. With a score of 6.83 this category is firmly in the Very Good camp – almost hitting a perfect score.

Backing up that high score is a string of positive comments from clients. One noted that it is "very satisfied with the way relationship is managed", while others pointed to "proactive and frequent interactions", and "great assistance in locating correct resource that will tackle our needs".

BNP	Deutsche Bank	Intesa	UBS
5.77	6.11	5.92	5.84
6.10	5.96	5.64	5.72
5.89	5.93	5.68	5.74
5.21	5.41	5.81	5.71
5.64	6.34	5.92	5.84
5.52	5.53	6.16	5.63
5.09	5.70	6.00	5.52
5.38	5.38	5.60	5.88
5.00	5.24	5.38	5.35
5.33	5.85	5.92	5.65
5.96	6.47	6.16	6.83
5.16	5.73	6.00	N/A
5.14	5.12	6.08	5.34
5.48	5.75	5.87	5.75

Ireland

The majority of Ireland's ratings are in the Good range. There are of course two clear exceptions, Technology at 4.98 and Securities Lending at 3.75. However, Securities Lending is a category which has seen a decline in multiple countries in Western Europe this year.

Relationship Management (5.87) has received the highest score with Asset Safety and Risk Management follows it up with a score of 5.48. Overall, the average score sits at a comfortable 5.11. Although this sits below the global average, Ireland is off to a strong start for its first appearance in the Agent Banks in Major Markets survey.

Ireland	Ireland 2024	Ireland 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.12	4.68	5.83	-0.70
Asset Safety and risk management	5.48	5.22	5.73	-0.25
Asset Servicing	5.11	4.56	5.59	-0.48
Cash Management and FX	5.13	4.81	5.46	-0.33
Client Service	5.21	4.47	5.84	-0.63
Data Services	5.13	5.00	5.44	-0.31
Service Innovation	5.18	4.67	5.43	-0.25
Liquidity Management	5.01	4.64	5.41	-0.40
Pricing	5.05	4.50	5.20	-0.16
Regulation and Compliance	5.43	5.11	5.57	-0.14
Relationship Management	5.87	4.95	6.15	-0.28
Securities Lending	3.71	4.57	5.17	-1.45
Technology	4.98	4.65	5.33	-0.35
Average	5.11	4.76	5.55	-0.44

Luxembourg

There has been a reshuffle at the top of the Luxembourg securities services playing field, with BNY, Citi, HSBC, and Northern Trust making senior personnel changes over the past 12 months. Meanwhile, at the beginning of the year, Euroclear FundsPlace was chosen by Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat Luxembourg (Spuerkeess) to enhance its fund management operations.

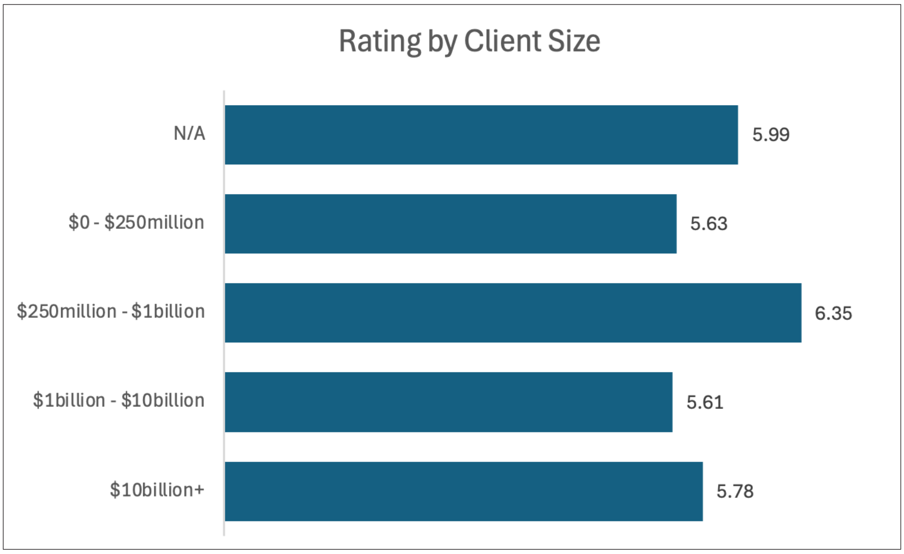
Sitting at 5.19 it is still a Good score for the market. Although it sits below the global average, there are still plenty of positive highlights to pull out. Relationship Management has the highest score at 5.86, followed by Client Service. Nearly every category, with the exception of three, are sitting in the Good range, between 5.00 – 5.99.

Luxembourg	Luxembourg 2024	Luxembourg 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.57	5.00	5.83	-0.26
Asset Safety and risk management	5.48	5.21	5.73	-0.24
Asset Servicing	5.17	5.00	5.59	-0.42
Cash Management and FX	5.21	4.77	5.46	-0.25
Client Service	5.72	4.87	5.84	-0.12
Data Services	5.05	5.08	5.44	-0.39
Service Innovation	5.05	4.77	5.43	-0.38
Liquidity Management	5.26	4.71	5.41	-0.15
Pricing	4.78	4.47	5.20	-0.42
Regulation and Compliance	5.20	5.00	5.57	-0.36
Relationship Management	5.86	5.20	6.15	-0.29
Securities Lending	4.40	4.33	5.17	-0.77
Technology	4.70	4.77	5.33	-0.63
Average	5.19	4.86	5.55	-0.36

Switzerland

Much of the last 12 months within the Swiss banking sector has been dealing with the fallout of the Credit Suisse saga – culminating in the UBS takeover being completed in May this year. Elsewhere, conversations around T+1 and potential alignment with the EU and the UK continue to rumble on.

Switzerland's overall average rating (5.68) sits above the global average (5.55), with every category sitting within the Good or Very Good ranges. While that's good news for the country, what may come as some surprise is that almost all categories have seen a slight drop since 2023. The only exceptions to the rule are Relationship Management (up 0.13), Client Service (up 0.04) and Liquidity Management (up 0.05).



BNP Paribas

BNP Paribas' data has shown some interesting findings. Some categories have seen a downward shift since last year, though both Client Service (6.03) and Relationship Management (6.18) continue to be rated as Very Good – largely due to its "excellent service" and "very active" responsiveness – as pointed out by a couple of client comments.

All categories – with the exception of Regulation and Compliance, and Securities Lending – received scores within the Very Good or Good range.

SIX Securities Services

Despite a slight drop in ratings across the board, SIX Securities Services has posted a strong set of scores in 2024, with six of the categories sitting at Very Good. It will come as little surprise that Client Service (6.47) and Relationship Management (6.56) received the highest scores, with plenty of praise for the provider.

Overall, the provider scored 5.97, sitting comfortably above both the global (5.55) and Swiss (5.68) averages this year.

One client commented: "Comprehensive, competent, efficient, skilful, professional and responsive service," while another said: "We really feel that we have an outstanding relationship with SIX SIS and the service

Switzerland	Switzerland 2024	Switzerland 2023	Global Average
Account Management	5.99	6.00	5.83
Asset Safety and risk management	5.90	5.96	5.73
Asset Servicing	5.77	5.82	5.59
Cash Management and FX	5.55	5.71	5.46
Client Service	6.02	5.98	5.84
Data Services	5.59	5.91	5.44
Service Innovation	5.48	5.77	5.43
Liquidity Management	5.63	5.58	5.41
Pricing	5.36	5.52	5.20
Regulation and Compliance	5.60	5.85	5.57
Relationship Management	6.47	6.34	6.15
Securities Lending	5.22	5.96	5.17
Technology	5.30	5.81	5.33
Average	5.68	5.86	5.55

Difference to Global	BNP	SIX	UBS
0.16	5.74	6.39	5.87
0.18	5.87	6.15	5.78
0.18	5.52	6.07	5.72
0.09	5.06	5.90	5.64
0.18	6.03	6.47	5.67
0.15	5.53	5.82	5.49
0.04	4.94	5.71	5.48
0.21	5.17	5.93	5.65
0.16	4.86	5.75	5.34
0.03	4.87	6.00	5.52
0.32	6.18	6.56	6.56
0.05	4.92	5.36	5.13
-0.02	5.09	5.55	5.16
0.13	5.37	5.97	5.62

they provide us is excellent."

The overall view of SIX's clients can be summed up by one comment: "We always feel that SIX is paying maximum attention to us and our needs."

UBS

UBS sits just above the global average, and excitingly has seen an improvement in its scores since 2023. Relationship Management (6.56) may have the highest score this year, but it is Liquid Management (5.65) which is the interesting story to take away from the data, registering an improvement of 34 basis points from the previous year. Unfortunately, clients have not left any comments for this category, so any particular reasons for the increase are not shared.

The Netherlands

There have been changes aplenty in the Netherlands over the last 12 months – notably the EMIR Review by the European Parliament, which will have a significant impact, in large due to its significant retail market in the country.

Similarly, the Dutch Tax Authorities issued the English version of the new agreement for Authorized Intermediaries that file tax reclaims on behalf of their clients, while the Dutch government also published a provisional list for The Tax Plan 2024, looking to amend the dividend withholding tax exemption, which could potentially impact the filing of Dutch Quick Reclaim filing.

When looking at the data, the Netherlands sits mainly at Good, with an overall score of 5.34. Relationship Management scores highest in the country, sitting within the Very Good range.

BNP Paribas

With an uptick in ratings, BNP Paribas' overall score sits comfortably at 5.53 (Good) and over half of categories saw an increase since 2023. Securities Lending (5.58) saw the largest increase, with an increase of 58 basis points.

Intesa Sanpaolo

All of Intesa Sanpaolo's ratings sit comfortably in the Good (5.00–5.99) and Very Good (6.00–6.99) range. Although Liquidity Management (5.20) saw a decrease of 37 basis points, the majority of categories have seen upward trends over the last 12 months. The most significant increases were seen in the Securities Lending (6.00) and Technology (5.88) categories, up 40 and eight basis points, respectively.

Netherlands	Netherlands 2024	Netherlands 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP	Intesa
Account Management	5.54	5.56	5.83	-0.28	5.66	6.24
Asset Safety and risk management	5.37	5.51	5.73	-0.35	5.76	5.76
Asset Servicing	5.34	5.40	5.59	-0.25	5.34	5.94
Cash Management and FX	5.33	5.18	5.46	-0.13	5.53	5.68
Client Service	5.55	5.73	5.84	-0.29	5.68	5.94
Data Services	5.15	5.38	5.44	-0.29	5.72	5.67
Service Innovation	5.30	5.22	5.43	-0.13	5.42	5.50
Liquidity Management	5.13	5.14	5.41	-0.28	5.38	5.20
Pricing	4.88	4.93	5.20	-0.33	4.85	5.38
Regulation and Compliance	5.43	5.53	5.57	-0.14	5.54	5.76
Relationship Management	6.01	5.98	6.15	-0.15	6.06	6.24
Securities Lending	5.28	5.24	5.17	0.12	5.58	6.00
Technology	5.12	5.13	5.33	-0.21	5.38	5.88
Average	5.34	5.38	5.55	-0.21	5.53	5.78

UK

Nearly every category saw an upward trend in ratings since 2023, amid a busy post-Brexit era where the UK is looking to establish itself in a new light.

Getting out of the blocks ahead of the EU, the UK T+1 task force this year published its recommendations for the transition to T+1 to take place by year-end 2027. Meanwhile, more recently in October 2024, the UK launched its DLT Pilot Regime, with organisers adapting its own digital securities sandbox (DSS) through lessons learnt from the EU's previously launched initiative.

With an average score of 5.15 (Good), the UK has seen a slight increase of five basis points from 2023. The driving force behind that increase was the Account Management (5.45) and Asset Servicing (5.22) categories, both jumping 20 basis points year-on-year. Securities Lending (4.38) has seen the largest downward trend (-0.27) but overall, the picture is bright for the UK market.

BNP Paribas

Sitting comfortably above the UK market average by 27 basis points, BNP Paribas remains in the Good range with a rating of 5.42. Although there have been some categories which have seen a slight decline in ratings this year, such as Pricing (-0.51), there are also those registering increases. Technology (5.62) has seen an increment of 32 basis points – with clients commenting how much they appreciate the "routine upgrades to Neolink", the training courses offered and all round "excellent service". In summary, one client commented: "BNP on the whole offers a good service".

UBS

It's been quite the 12 months for UBS, with an uptick in all bar one category. The overall average has jumped 37 basis points, reaching 5.51 (Good). Every category sits within the Good or Very Good ranges. Account Management (6.00) has seen the largest uptick, increasing by 0.63 year-on-year.

Only Relationship Management (5.61) registered a decline in rating, falling 16 basis points – though still sits within the Good range. The comments, however, do not reflect this drop – with one noting the "very proactive and frequent interactions" with the bank.

UK	UK 2024	UK 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP	UBS
Account Management	5.45	5.25	5.83	-0.37	5.69	6.00
Asset Safety and risk management	5.49	5.36	5.73	-0.23	5.97	5.74
Asset Servicing	5.22	5.02	5.59	-0.37	5.49	5.66
Cash Management and FX	5.21	5.09	5.46	-0.25	5.31	5.72
Client Service	5.29	5.20	5.84	-0.55	5.69	5.79
Data Services	5.18	5.17	5.44	-0.26	5.77	5.28
Service Innovation	5.04	4.96	5.43	-0.40	5.34	5.39
Liquidity Management	5.26	5.14	5.41	-0.15	5.34	5.70
Pricing	4.77	4.88	5.20	-0.43	4.52	5.14
Regulation and Compliance	5.19	5.17	5.57	-0.37	5.36	5.48
Relationship Management	5.41	5.41	6.15	-0.74	5.89	5.61
Securities Lending	4.38	4.65	5.17	-0.78	4.44	5.04
Technology	5.04	5.02	5.33	-0.28	5.62	5.09
Average	5.15	5.10	5.55	-0.40	5.42	5.51

Southern Europe

	Respondent Priorities
1st	Client Service
2nd	Account Management
3rd	Relationship Management
4th	Asset Servicing
5th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
6th	Pricing
7th	Regulation and Compliance
8th	Cash Management and FX
9th	Technology
10th	Liquidity Management
11th	Data Services
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

When it comes to our survey results this year, Southern Europe has seen an uptick in its overall average rating. With a score of 5.41, this region sits just below the global average. However, compared to last year, nearly every category has seen an uptick – with the exception of Securities Lending.

Data Services (5.31), Pricing (4.99) and Regulation and Compliance (5.41) - have seen no shift in rating in the last 12 months.

Service Innovation and Relationship Management saw the largest annual shift, both increasing by 18 basis points, with Relationship Management receiving the highest score (6.08). Despite this increase in ratings Relationship Management is only rated third in the list of client priorities, while Service Innovation is in 12th place. Although providers in Southern Europe are excelling in these areas, clients are looking for providers to focus on Client Service, Account Management and Relationship Management.

BNP Paribas, a key player in this region, appears in all three markets, while Intesa Sanpaolo also features. For BNP though, Southern Europe is a region in which the custodian continues to excel. Asset Safety and Risk Management, and Technology sit 17 basis points above the regional average. Intesa Sanpaolo cannot be overlooked here either, although only appearing in one market in Southern Europe (Italy) this provider outperforms the regional average at each category.

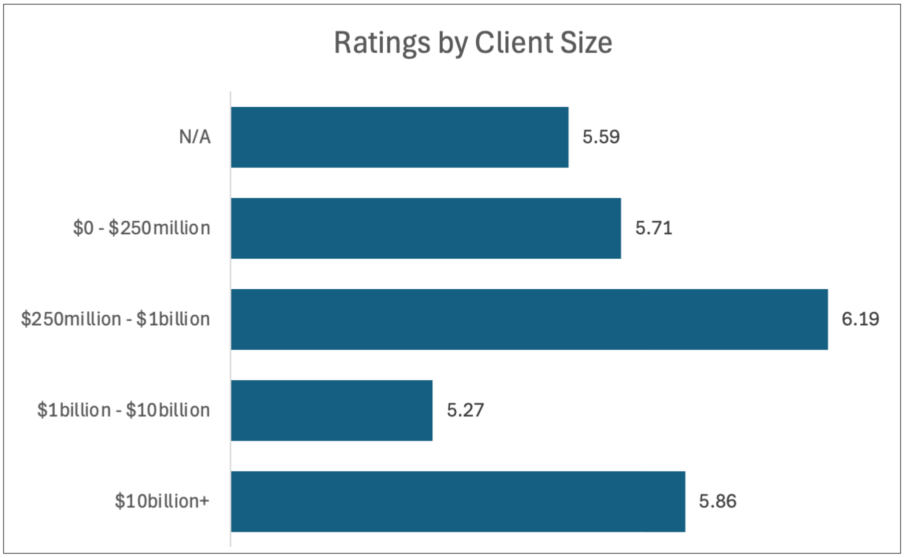
Across the board, Southern Europe sits below the global average.

Southern Europe	2024	2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.70	5.54	5.83	-0.12
Asset Safety and risk management	5.59	5.48	5.73	-0.14
Asset Servicing	5.53	5.36	5.59	-0.07
Cash Management and FX	5.28	5.18	5.46	-0.18
Client Service	5.81	5.70	5.84	-0.03
Data Services	5.31	5.31	5.44	-0.13
Service Innovation	5.38	5.19	5.43	-0.06
Liquidity Management	5.22	5.12	5.41	-0.19
Pricing	4.99	4.99	5.20	-0.21
Regulation and Compliance	5.41	5.41	5.57	-0.16
Relationship Management	6.08	5.90	6.15	-0.07
Securities Lending	4.85	4.97	5.17	-0.32
Technology	5.16	5.12	5.33	-0.17
Average	5.41	5.33	5.55	-0.14

Italy

The Italian market sits comfortably at Good, with its overall rating up from last year. Changes to the operational process of the Italian CSD are being planned to start from 2027 with support for Swift 15022 and 20022 formats.

Although the market average sits just below the global average, over half of the categories have seen an improvement over the last 12 months.



BNP Paribas

Sitting comfortably at Good, Relationship Management (5.98) has the highest score this year for the custodian. Given BNP Paribas' multilingual service, and how it is currently "digitalising service reviews, providing our clients with an efficient, client-centric and harmonised," a high score in this category may not be surprising. Clients are quick to praise the service they receive from BNP Paribas, with regular check-ins and updates appreciated in the comments, while more than one has referred to the custodian as "best in class".

Client Service follows in close second, rated 5.74, with praise from clients specifically highlighting the "excellent support before and during implementation of CSDR".

Notably, BNP Paribas was announced in July 2024 to be set to provide depositary bank services to EPPI, an Italian retirement scheme for the industrial sector, representing €2 billion in assets.

Intesa Sanpaolo

With six of the 13 categories sitting in the Very Good range, there is plenty of positive takeaways for Intesa Sanpaolo. Client Service and Account Management have the joint highest score, reaching 6.48. One respondent noted how "the Client Service and dedicated account officers are very supportive with their explanations and assistance in inquiries" while the Account Management team are praised for being "very competent with in-depth market knowledge" and showing "great care and attention to our needs".

Service Innovation (6.19) saw the largest uptick in ratings from last year, with clients excited about the offer of "alternative reporting available via ISP's online tool".

Italy	Italy 2024	Italy 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP	Instesa
Account Management	5.78	5.74	5.83	-0.04	5.62	6.48
Asset Safety and risk management	5.68	5.59	5.73	-0.05	5.61	6.09
Asset Servicing	5.60	5.51	5.59	0.00	5.35	6.13
Cash Management and FX	5.28	5.35	5.46	-0.18	5.16	5.66
Client Service	5.89	5.81	5.84	0.06	5.74	6.48
Data Services	5.39	5.42	5.44	-0.05	5.26	5.73
Service Innovation	5.41	5.3	5.43	-0.03	5.05	6.19
Liquidity Management	5.22	5.2	5.41	-0.19	5.21	5.32
Pricing	5.05	5.19	5.20	-0.15	4.76	5.69
Regulation and Compliance	5.45	5.53	5.57	-0.12	5.24	5.83
Relationship Management	6.14	5.98	6.15	-0.01	5.98	6.46
Securities Lending	4.89	5.08	5.17	-0.28	4.76	5.00
Technology	5.28	5.18	5.33	-0.05	5.16	5.64
Average	5.47	5.45	5.55	-0.08	5.30	5.90

Portugal

In Portugal the CSD has begun implementing a new corporate action platform, including new web interface adding flexibility. The first stage of migration began in April 2024, impacting fixed income, and it is expected to be completed by November 2024. Other asset classes are expected to be impacted throughout 2025. Meanwhile, in June 2024 the Portuguese Parliament approved a set of tax measures aiming to boost the development of the capital market in Portugal.

These changes have not stopped our respondents rating this country as Good. Sitting just below the global average, there has been some improvement between 2023 and 2024. Most notable is the improvement for Cash Management and FX, which has jumped up 0.14. However, this is not the only category to see an upward shift – with five additional segments improving from last year and a further two remaining static.

BNP Paribas

BNP Paribas reported that it is fully committed to the Portuguese market, and how "in light of the current initiatives, we are working to improve our solutions to better respond to our clients' needs and the new market requirements".

The bank will be improving upon a strong base, according to the results, with both Relationship Management (5.97) and Client Service (5.75) receiving the highest scores. In fact, clients are quick to praise the provider's "very competent and pro-active dedicated relationship manager" while the client service team is also praised for its pro-active approach.

The real headline this year is Securities Lending (5.21) which has seen the largest uptick since 2023, improving by 46 basis points. This will come as little surprise, with BNP Paribas having launched its investment project for Agency Securities Lending which the bank is pleased to announce "has yielded great results".

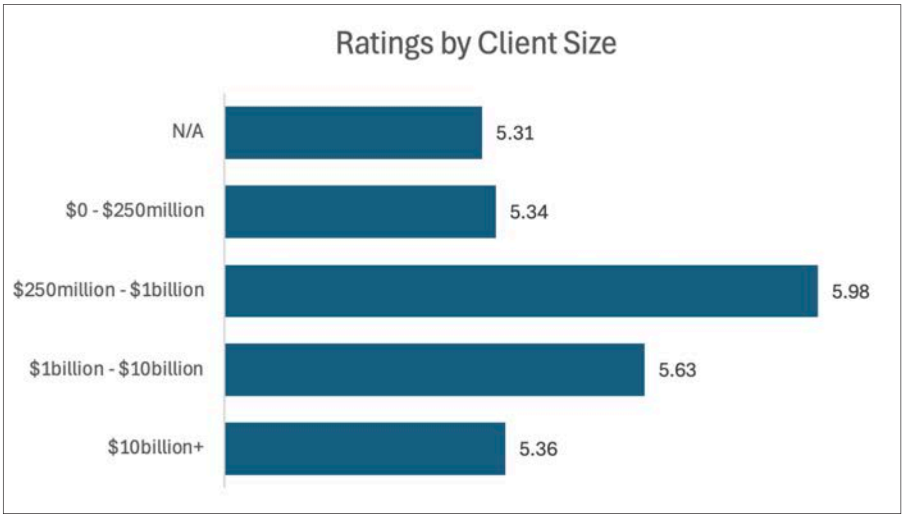
Portugal	Portugal 2024	Portugal 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP
Account Management	5.47	5.39	5.83	-0.36	5.66
Asset Safety and risk management	5.29	5.41	5.73	-0.44	5.56
Asset Servicing	5.31	5.23	5.59	-0.28	5.44
Cash Management and FX	5.14	5.00	5.46	-0.33	5.38
Client Service	5.61	5.61	5.84	-0.23	5.75
Data Services	4.79	5.25	5.44	-0.64	4.98
Service Innovation	5.17	5.10	5.43	-0.26	5.29
Liquidity Management	4.95	4.96	5.41	-0.46	5.16
Pricing	4.82	4.82	5.20	-0.39	5.01
Regulation and Compliance	5.17	5.38	5.57	-0.40	5.25
Relationship Management	5.87	5.83	6.15	-0.28	5.97
Securities Lending	4.83	5.00	5.17	-0.34	5.21
Technology	4.95	5.21	5.33	-0.37	5.48
Average	5.18	5.25	5.55	-0.37	5.39

Spain

On a macro level there have been several changes of note in the last few months. The Capital Markets Law was introduced in March 2023, which resulted in significant changes to the post-trade landscape. BNP Paribas suggested the introduction of this new law may be to make the Spanish market more compatible with the expected implementation of T+1 settlement.

Looking at the survey results, it has been an excellent year for Spain, with an uptick in scores across the board.

Account Management has seen the largest uptick since 2023, while both Data Services and Service Innovation have beaten the global average this year.



BNP Paribas

Just beating the country average, BNP Paribas has been rated Good by our respondents. Asset Safety and Risk Management has received the highest score, rated Very Good, at 6.09. This category has also seen the largest uptick since last year – moving up 32 basis points. One client points out that BNP Paribas "makes us more than aware of any market alerts and how to resolve them," while another reports to being confident in the custodian's "constant monitoring of our account".

The praise for BNP Paribas goes above and beyond the categories included in this research report. One notes the "brilliant relationship" with the bank and how they are looking to build on what they have currently. With many individuals within the custodian's Spanish operations mentioned by name, it is clear that clients are very happy. One refers to the "excellent service" noting "we are very happy with BNP Paribas as our agent".

Spain	Spain 2024	Spain 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP
Account Management	5.77	5.41	5.83	-0.06	5.84
Asset Safety and risk management	5.68	5.39	5.73	-0.05	6.09
Asset Servicing	5.59	5.29	5.59	0.00	5.53
Cash Management and FX	5.37	5.08	5.46	-0.09	5.17
Client Service	5.84	5.64	5.84	0.00	5.76
Data Services	5.51	5.22	5.44	0.07	5.44
Service Innovation	5.46	5.14	5.43	0.03	5.39
Liquidity Management	5.36	5.12	5.41	-0.05	5.27
Pricing	5.04	4.88	5.20	-0.16	5.19
Regulation and Compliance	5.52	5.29	5.57	-0.05	5.49
Relationship Management	6.14	5.84	6.15	-0.01	5.84
Securities Lending	4.80	4.8	5.17	-0.36	4.97
Technology	5.08	4.97	5.33	-0.24	5.33
Average	5.47	5.24	5.55	-0.08	5.49

Asia

Asia's prominence as a region in focus can be seen in the sheer amount of coverage the continent has received from Global Custodian this year. This can be typified in our article earlier this year which discussed a "golden age for asset servicers in the region" over the past 12 months.

Taking a look at Global Custodian's latest data in the Agent Banks in Major Markets survey, the scores certainly reflect the increasingly positive sentiment in the region. With an average overall score of 5.81, sitting 26 basis points above the global average (5.55), the Asian market has seen a notable improvement from last year's score.

Relationship Management (6.36), Client Service (6.08) and Account Management (6.07) are the three highest scoring categories – all in the Very Good range (6.00 – 6.99). This is particularly noteworthy, given that Client Services and Account Management were considered the most important categories by our Asia-based respondents.

Across the board there has been an upward shift in ratings for every category this year. Most impressive is once again Relationship Management and Client Service, increasing by 54 and 42 basis points, respectively.

	Respondent Priorities
1st	Client Service
2nd	Relationship Management
3rd	Account Management
4th	Pricing
5th	Asset Servicing
6th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
7th	Cash Management and FX
8th	Regulation and Compliance
9th	Technology
10th	Liquidity Management
11th	Data Services
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

Also interesting to note, is that - while usually it is Pricing which receives the lowest score – this year it is Securities Lending (5.49) which ranks lowest. However, this category is still sitting firmly in the Good (5.00 – 5.99) range. Perhaps the fact that this category also scored lowest in the list of priorities may also have an implication on this rating.

Worth highlighting this year is Technology (5.69), rated ninth in the list of priorities, this category sits comfortably at Good and has seen a notable improvement on last year's score. However, with the recent focus on technology by the Asian market, the category actually has the third lowest market score, suggesting that perhaps clients are still looking for further advancements in the space.

This may soon be answered however, with Hong Kong and Singapore regulators pushing innovation with sandbox initiatives covering AI, tokenisation and other new types of technologies through a number of pilots and collaborations with market participants. It will be exciting to see how these new developments reflect in next year's scores.

The hot topic for much of the sub-custody sector has been the subject of the shift to T+1 in the US, which has been hard to miss. The operational challenges became a bigger issue for investors the farther away they were situated, with regards to time zones.

Incidentally, in a recent roundtable discussion hosted by Global Custodian, experts from Asia Pacific commented how surprisingly a few issues and none of the concerns pre-T+1 launch, materi-

Asia	2024	2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	6.07	5.69	5.83	0.24
Asset Safety and risk management	5.91	5.74	5.73	0.18
Asset Servicing	5.81	5.57	5.59	0.22
Cash Management and FX	5.72	5.40	5.46	0.26
Client Service	6.08	5.66	5.84	0.24
Data Services	5.71	5.45	5.44	0.27
Service Innovation	5.73	5.39	5.43	0.29
Liquidity Management	5.71	5.34	5.41	0.29
Pricing	5.51	5.16	5.20	0.31
Regulation and Compliance	5.80	5.56	5.57	0.23
Relationship Management	6.36	5.81	6.15	0.20
Securities Lending	5.49	5.13	5.17	0.32
Technology	5.69	5.35	5.33	0.36
Average	5.81	5.48	5.55	0.26

alised. The first few months of the transition should not be taken as a certainty that further issues will not arise in the future, however.

Having – somewhat – navigated the US transition, attention now turns to Asia's own markets. However, despite individual markets considering a future reduction in settlement time, there has been some concerns about the leap from T+1 to T+0, or instant settlement, with warnings from the experts that: "Don't assume going from T+2 to T+1 means you can leap to T+0". Of course, it is safe to assume this will continue to be a hot topic of conversation throughout the investment industry in the upcoming future.

On the matter of settlement, the Hong Kong Exchange recently launched its own accelerated settlement platform, which has been well received by the industry.

In this year's Agent Banks in Major Markets survey when it comes to Asia there are four markets which will make an appearance.

Hong Kong

Providers in Hong Kong have this year scored an overall average rating of 5.57, sitting in line with the global average (5.55). Excitingly this is a significant improvement on last year's score – increasing by an impressive 0.30 decimal places. In fact, every category has seen an uptick in its ratings since 2023.

Outside of our survey results, Hong Kong appears to be establishing itself as one of the most forward-thinking markets for innovation, embracing concepts such as AI, tokenisation and other forms of digital assets.

The Hong Kong Exchange itself also rolled out its settlement acceleration platform for Stock Connect in October 2023. First announced back in 2020 the platform uses Daml smart contracts to standardise and streamline post-trade workflows, enhancing operational efficiencies and transparency whilst reducing settlement risks.

The other big news out of Hong Kong this year was JP Morgan's selection of HSBC as its sub-custodian after a nine-month search process.

Back to the survey scores and the most significant increase can be seen in Liquidity Management (5.55) which saw an upward trend of 46 basis points, followed by Relationship Management (6.14) which was up 0.40 and Account Management (5.89) with a rise of 0.38.

Taking a look at the overall scores, Relationship Management scored the highest with 6.14, sitting in the Very Good range. This is followed by Account Management (5.89) and Asset Safety and Risk Management (5.79) both scoring Good.

Securities Lending (4.98) has the lowest score, sitting just shy of the Good range. However, this segment has also seen an increase, up 0.35 decimal places on last year.

BNP Paribas

BNP Paribas remains in the Good range (5.00–5.99) with an overall score of 5.28, marking a slight downward shift from last year. Six of the 13 categories have seen an uptick in ratings since 2023. This year there are three categories which share the highest marks – Account Management, Asset Safety and Risk and Relationship Management, each scoring 5.85. Clients highlight BNP Paribas' attentiveness and speed in which it responds to queries and requests.

Three categories sit at Satisfactory (4.00 – 4.99) this year. Pricing (4.25) and Securities Lending (4.11) remain in the same bracket as 2023, and are this year joined by Regulation and Compliance (4.60) which has fallen 0.49 decimal places in the last 12 months. Despite these scores, clients appear to be content with the service they receive from the custodian, with some commenting that the pricing is "fair". In terms of areas for potential improvement, one client suggests that a more regular review process would be beneficial.

DBS Bank

With an overall average score of 5.89, DBS Bank is sitting at the top-end of the Good range. Asset Safety and Risk Management and Regulation and Compliance score the highest with 6.07 and 6.02, respectively, with the bank praised for its "security system" and "high quality and continuous monitoring".

While Securities Lending has the lowest score, it is still rated firmly at Good (5.72).

While DBS' overall average has fallen once again, the most significant decline is for Relationship Management, falling 50 basis points since 2023.

Speaking to Global Custodian, DBS Bank said it is feeling optimistic with regards to the landscape, highlighting how

Hong Kong	Hong Kong 2024	Hong Kong 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP Paribas
Account Management	5.89	5.51	5.83	0.06	5.85
Asset Safety and risk management	5.79	5.55	5.73	0.06	5.85
Asset Servicing	5.50	5.33	5.59	-0.09	5.50
Cash Management and FX	5.51	5.19	5.46	0.04	5.45
Client Service	5.75	5.54	5.84	-0.08	5.80
Data Services	5.46	5.31	5.44	0.02	5.60
Service Innovation	5.44	5.12	5.43	0.01	5.30
Liquidity Management	5.55	5.08	5.41	0.13	5.20
Pricing	5.25	5.03	5.20	0.04	4.25
Regulation and Compliance	5.64	5.34	5.57	0.08	4.60
Relationship Management	6.14	5.73	6.15	-0.01	5.85
Securities Lending	4.98	4.63	5.17	-0.19	4.11
Technology	5.46	5.15	5.33	0.14	5.25
Average	5.57	5.27	5.55	0.02	5.28

the Hong Kong funds market has been developing in recent years, “through the introduction of Open-Ended Fund Companies (OFCs)”.

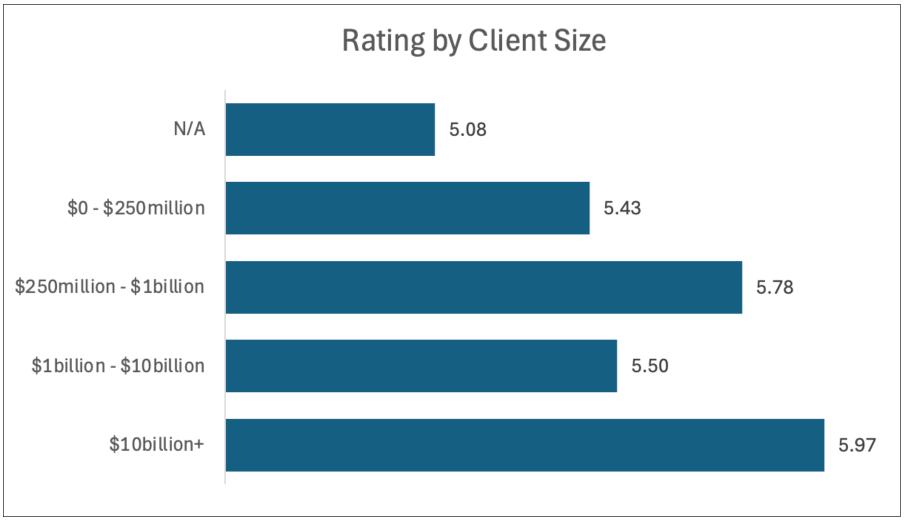
Deutsche Bank

Appearing for the first time in this market, Deutsche Bank has scored an average overall total of 5.58, sitting just above the global average. Interestingly, it is Securities Lending (7.00) which has received the highest score, although both Client Service (6.03) and Account Management (6.00) are also sitting in the Very Good range.

Pricing, Data Services and Technology are all rated Satisfactory, with clients highlighting the need for more accessibility with regards to its online portal.

Scoring in the Good range, the bank’s Relationship Management team received excellent feedback. Clients who have left comments are quick to sing Deutsche Bank’s praises for its “close monitoring of accounts” and the speed in which it informs clients of any issues.

What is worth noting is that in six of the categories listed, this provider manages to beat both the global and Hong Kong average scores. Particularly impressive is that when it comes to Securities Lending this category is rated an impressive 2.02 decimal places above the Hong Kong average, and 1.83 decimal places above the global average.



Standard Chartered Bank

Standard Chartered Bank is back once again, and this year the provider has seen a significant uptick in its overall average rating. Sitting at 6.05, SCB has moved up from being rated Good in 2023, to Very Good this year.

Looking more closely at the data, an impressive seven of the 13 categories score over 6.00. It is also worth noting that every category has seen an uptick in rating over the last 12 months.

Most impressive is Technology (6.15) which last year was rated as Satisfactory, this year this category has seen a significant increase of 1.22 decimal places, now sitting comfortably within the Very Good bracket. Account Management (6.61) and Securities Lending (6.00) also saw notable rises, up 1.14 and 1.12 decimal places, respectively.

UBS

Following on from its appearance in ABMM last year, UBS has seen a notable uptick across the board when it comes to its ratings. With an overall average of 5.56, marginally above the global average of 5.55, it is the improvement in scores which are most interesting when it comes to this provider.

Every single category has seen an improvement since 2023, with the largest increase in the Securities Lending segment. This category is currently sitting at Satisfactory, which is an improvement from last year and has in fact jumped up 0.61 decimal places over the last 12 months. Liquidity Management (5.77) has also seen a considerable improvement, increasing 47 basis points. Relationship Management (6.60) received the highest score overall, sitting firmly at Very Good.

DBS Bank	Deutsche Bank	SCB	UBS
5.88	6.00	6.61	5.90
6.07	5.86	6.27	5.74
5.90	5.76	5.61	5.57
5.78	5.84	5.75	5.46
5.98	6.03	5.78	5.88
5.93	4.89	6.06	5.37
5.90	5.32	5.93	5.34
5.82	5.14	5.95	5.77
5.78	4.84	5.85	5.26
6.02	5.45	6.27	5.68
5.95	5.53	6.46	6.60
5.72	7.00	6.00	4.28
5.85	4.95	6.15	5.45
5.89	5.58	6.05	5.56

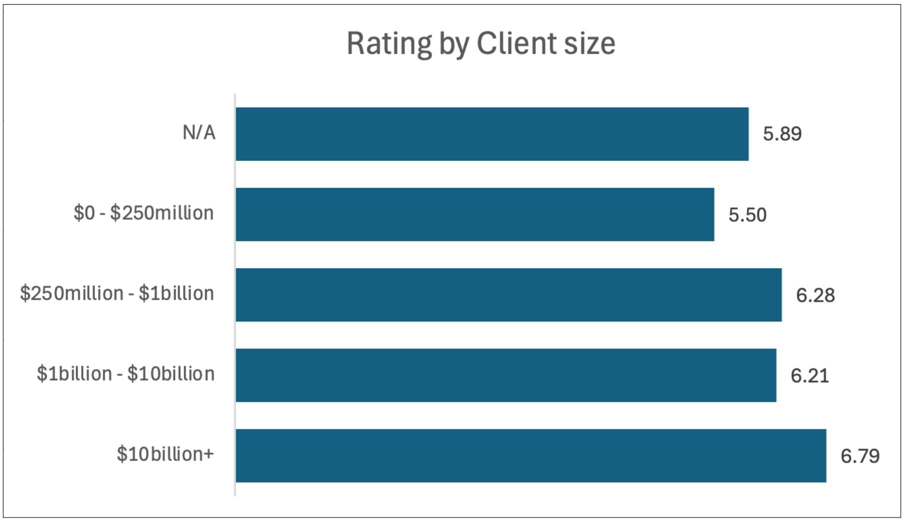
Japan

It will come as no surprise to our regular readers that once again Japan is sitting firmly in the Very Good range – having posted the highest score for any major market in both 2022 and 2023. With an overall average of 6.39 this country is head and shoulders above the global average and has seen a significant uptick in its average rating since last year (increasing its overall score by 0.38).

Where do you start with the superlatives for Japan's scores year-in, year out? This year every single category has been rated as Very Good, as well as each beating their score from the previous year. Taking a look at client size, respondents cover a wide range of AUMs, but it is those with larger holdings that rate the country the highest.

Securities Lending scores highest, a category which - across markets - is largely unloved by the majority of respondents. However, for the Japanese market this category has an almost perfect score sitting at 6.78. This is closely followed by Relationship Management (6.77) and Client Service (6.65).

It is not just the data which has seen some interesting changes in the last 12 months. While Japan's interest rate actions have been the talk of markets on a global scale, we also saw – in the securities services space - Japan's Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF) re-enter the realm of lending foreign stocks following a four-year hiatus due to transparency and voting concerns.



Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking Corporation (MUFG)

For the third consecutive year, MUFG has seen an increase in its overall average score sitting comfortably at 5.91. Relationship Management has the highest score, with plenty of praise for how the team is "keen to support our special requests". MUFG believes that its focus on offering a "white glove client service response focusing on client first approach" sets it apart from competitors, while "fluent Japanese staff to communicate with all Japanese based clients" is a key feature of the bank's offering.

Japan	Japan 2024	Japan 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	6.61	6.12	5.83	0.78
Asset Safety and risk management	6.29	6.13	5.73	0.56
Asset Servicing	6.38	6.08	5.59	0.78
Cash Management and FX	6.34	5.91	5.46	0.87
Client Service	6.65	6.22	5.84	0.81
Data Services	6.26	5.91	5.44	0.82
Service Innovation	6.30	5.97	5.43	0.87
Liquidity Management	6.19	5.81	5.41	0.77
Pricing	6.07	5.46	5.20	0.87
Regulation and Compliance	6.23	6.08	5.57	0.66
Relationship Management	6.77	6.24	6.15	0.62
Securities Lending	6.78	6.26	5.17	1.61
Technology	6.25	5.97	5.33	0.93
Average	6.39	6.01	5.55	0.84

	MUFG	Mizuho Bank
	6.74	7.00
	6.00	6.74
	5.74	6.91
	5.68	6.91
	6.80	7.00
	6.00	6.73
	5.41	6.91
	5.83	6.66
	5.00	6.91
	5.65	6.78
	7.00	7.00
	5.00	7.00
	6.00	6.84
	5.91	6.88

Relationship Management has also seen the largest annual shift – increasing with an impressive 89 basis points. Account Management has also seen a significant uptick (up 85 basis points) pushing this category firmly into the Very Good camp.

While three categories have seen a slight dip in their ratings, every single category has been rated as Good or above.

Mizuho Bank

Always a strong performer in this survey, Mizuho Bank logs another impressive performance, with an overall score of 6.88. The Tokyo-headquartered provider scores firmly at Very Good and has even seen an uptick from last year – with four categories this year receiving perfect scores. In fact, every single category has seen an improvement in ratings since 2023, and not one scores below 6.00. It will come as little surprise then, that there is plenty of praise for Mizuho Bank, which is regarded as “the No.1 agent bank in the Japanese Market” by clients, who also note that “Mizuho is always our first call bank”.

Excitingly - and always surprisingly given the global sentiment to this category - Pricing has seen the largest annual upward trend with an overall score of 6.91 (up 0.46 decimal places). Data Services (6.73) and Technology (6.84) has also seen significant movement since 2023.

When assessing the market, the sub-custodian notes some concerns about the T+1 migration in the US highlighting several areas where issues may occur. Even if signs are somewhat positive a few months into adapting to the new cycle, there is still a long way to go before Asian investors can fully claim to be operationally adjusted to the new US schedule. Mizuho also notes the need for this adoption domestically and that there have been discussions among the Financial Services Agency “so that Japan’s securities settlement system would not be left behind the rest of the world”.

Korea

For the third year in a row the Korean market has seen an uptick in its overall rating – with a score of 5.81 - sitting comfortably above the global average (5.55). For the first time since 2022 not a single category is sitting below Good (5.00).

Relationship Management has the highest score at 6.44, closely followed by Client Service (6.34). Both categories have seen a significant upward swing in ratings by an impressive 1.06 and 1.03 decimal places, respectively. They are joined in the Very Good range by Account Management, which scored 6.23.

When it comes to client size, this market has quite the diverse range of respondents. It is the clients in the $250 million-$1 billion range that have rated this market the highest at 6.95. Even then, the lowest rating at 5.05 for those in the $0-$250 million camp, still sits at Good.

The story for securities in Korea this year has been around its CSD signing deals with ICSDs Euroclear and Clearstream to further open up its markets to foreign investors.

After intentions were signalled in 2023, both ICSDs established their direct links to the Korean Securities Depository (KSD) in the same week this summer.

Standard Chartered Bank

It has been an excellent year for Standard Chartered Bank. With an overall average score of 6.36, all categories have seen an uptick in ratings since 2023.

Perhaps most notable is Technology (6.37), which jumped 129 basis points year-on-year. A category which has historically ranked poorly when it comes to the Asian regional score, it would appear that Standard Chartered Bank is breaking the mould for its clients. Client Services and Securities Lending have also seen a significant increase since last year. In fact, six of the 13 categories have seen a rating increase by over 1.00 decimal points – a remarkable achievement.

Although Technology has seen the largest shift, it is Relationship Management (6.98) which has the highest score – with a near perfect rating from its clients. Praise is piled on from clients for SCB's "excellent client focus" and "proactive assistance in fixing problems / issues".

Korea	Korea 2024	Korea 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	Standard Chartered Bank
Account Management	6.23	5.71	5.83	0.40	6.77
Asset Safety and risk management	5.87	5.82	5.73	0.15	6.32
Asset Servicing	5.81	5.71	5.59	0.22	6.24
Cash Management and FX	5.51	5.62	5.46	0.04	5.85
Client Service	6.34	5.31	5.84	0.50	6.85
Data Services	5.93	5.40	5.44	0.49	6.47
Service Innovation	5.93	5.41	5.43	0.49	6.47
Liquidity Management	5.30	5.27	5.41	-0.11	5.92
Pricing	5.21	5.21	5.20	0.00	5.67
Regulation and Compliance	5.87	5.38	5.57	0.31	6.32
Relationship Management	6.44	5.38	6.15	0.29	6.98
Securities Lending	5.38	4.90	5.17	0.22	6.40
Technology	5.76	5.00	5.33	0.43	6.37
Average	5.81	5.39	5.55	0.26	6.36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Singapore

One market which will never be accused of "lip service" when it comes to innovation is Singapore, which proudly sits at the forefront of exploratory initiatives with some of the world's largest custodians.

Through pilots, sandbox initiatives and getting buy-in from financial service providers prominent in Singapore, the market has become a global leader in fintech, pushing the boundaries of AI, quantum technology and digital assets.

The most notable of these is Project Guardian, a collaborative initiative between policymakers and the financial industry to enhance liquidity and efficiency of financial markets through asset tokenisation.

With an overall score of 5.66, the Singapore market is sitting comfortably at Good, beating both the global average and its 2023 score. With a wide range of clients this year it is those in the $250 million-$1 billion bracket that have rated this market the highest at 6.02.

With all bar one category beating the global average, it is Relationship Management (6.30) which has the highest score, closely followed by Client Service (5.98).

Only Securities Lending has seen a decline in scores - falling 0.48 - but remains in the Satisfactory segment.

T+1 has been the hot topic for the majority of markets and Singapore is no exceptions. Exactly when a move will occur is still up for debate, but settlement cycle reduction for major markets appears to be inevitable at this point.

DBS Bank

It has been an interesting year for DBS Bank, Singapore. Overall, this provider has a rating of 6.18, and with the majority of categories rated as Very Good the overall picture is positive. DBS takes pride in its success and being recognised as the "Best Agent Bank in both Singapore and Hong Kong" at the Global Custodian Leaders in Custody Awards this year.

Of course, there are plenty of positives to highlight. Asset Safety and Risk Management (6.78) has the highest

Singapore	Singapore 2024	Singapore 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	DBS Bank
Account Management	5.88	5.59	5.83	0.05	6.41
Asset Safety and risk management	5.88	5.69	5.73	0.15	6.78
Asset Servicing	5.75	5.44	5.59	0.16	6.38
Cash Management and FX	5.58	5.22	5.46	0.12	6.19
Client Service	5.98	5.58	5.84	0.14	6.22
Data Services	5.57	5.36	5.44	0.13	6.16
Service Innovation	5.60	5.38	5.43	0.16	6.19
Liquidity Management	5.64	5.46	5.41	0.23	6.54
Pricing	5.46	5.10	5.20	0.25	6.16
Regulation and Compliance	5.66	5.60	5.57	0.10	6.66
Relationship Management	6.30	5.83	6.15	0.15	6.28
Securities Lending	4.61	5.08	5.17	-0.56	4.64
Technology	5.61	5.40	5.33	0.28	5.75
Average	5.66	5.44	5.55	0.11	6.18

score, while Cash Management and FX (6.19) has seen the largest annual shift – pushing this category into the Very Good range.

Looking ahead this provider says it is looking to continue to provide "invaluable support, established trust, and strong partnerships".

Deutsche Bank

This is the first time Deutsche Bank is making an appearance in the Singapore section of this survey, and the provider has entered with quite the splash. Scoring an overall rating of 6.16, nearly every category scored above 6.00 - with the exception of Account Management, which scored 5.83 (in line with the global average) and Liquidity Management (5.98).

Deutsche Bank is one of the custodians working with the Monetary Authority of Singapore's (MAS) on Project Guardian, a collaborative initiative between policymakers and the financial industry to enhance liquidity and efficiency of financial markets through asset tokenisation.

In addition, Deutsche Bank also rolled out Proxymity's Vote Connect Global (VCG) product in Singapore this year. Commenting on this expansion of its partnership with Proxymity the bank commented that it hoped the introduction will "transform its post-trade services, and our partnership with Proxymity" stating that the "innovative technologies enables us to craft the latest and best in class service offerings for our clients."

Standard Chartered Bank

Back once again, SCB has made quite the shift since 2023. Sitting at Very Good, with an overall average score of 6.08, across every category there has been an uptick in ratings over the last 12 months.

Most impressive is its Pricing score this year. A category which is traditionally one of the lower scorers, this year SCB bucks the trend with a year-on-year increase of 1.20 decimal points to move into the Very Good range – quite an impressive shift, and according to their clients- due to its competitive rates.

Even Regulation and Compliance which has had the smallest shift, has moved up 0.69, sitting at 5.99, with clients regarding SCB as "one of the most compliant banks out there".

UBS

UBS has seen an improvement in its average score from last year, with Relationship Management, Liquidity Management and Account Management all beating the market average. This will come as little surprise, with clients quick to praise UBS for its responsiveness and how it is "always keen to resolve issues to our best satisfaction".

Relationship Management is in the Very Good camp (6.60), with one client highlighting that, despite the size of UBS, this does not impact its attention to each client any less, with one manager highlighted as being a "performant person working closely with their clients". Meanwhile Pricing (5.18) has seen the largest annual shift, increasing 0.47 due to the bank's competitive rates.

Deutsche Bank	Standard Chartered Bank	UBS
5.83	6.42	5.90
6.33	6.32	5.63
6.33	6.23	5.57
5.85	5.88	5.57
6.48	6.31	5.88
6.08	6.12	5.24
6.21	5.93	5.26
5.98	5.91	5.77
6.16	6.00	5.18
6.15	5.99	5.50
6.54	6.44	6.60
6.08	5.70	3.45
6.06	5.84	5.56
6.16	6.08	5.47

Nordics

Taking a look at NASDAQ Nordic Index (NOMXN) over the last year, there's been positive news coming out of the region. At the time of writing there had been 20%+ increase between September 2023 and September 2024.

Regulatory and market infrastructure talking points are top of mind for the Nordics, most notably T2S, CSDR and T+1. On the former, Sweden's central bank, Riksbank, has said it will prioritise a transition to the Eurosystem's payments settlement platform T2 ahead of a move to T2S, meaning it would likely complete its move to the latter around 2035.

The central bank decided that its preferred direction going forward is to use the Eurosystem's platforms, however moving to both in parallel would not be beneficial.

As a transition to the T2 platform takes around five years, this means that a transition to the T2S platform can only start around 2030 and be completed only in the mid-2030s, Riksbank said.

Taking a look at the data, the Nordic overall average has seen an increase for a third year running, this year jumping nine basis points to reach 5.39. Relationship Management (6.23) has the highest score this year, as well as the largest annual shift from 2023 – rising 50 basis points.

As well as beating the global average, the Nordics also beat the global average in three categories: Relationship Management (6.23), Account Management (5.89) and Asset Servicing (5.61). Additionally, 11 of the 13 categories are rated as Good or Very Good, with a significant majority of improving on their score from 2023.

When coming to look at the list of respondent priorities, it is Client Service which is rated as most important. Fortunately for providers in the Nordics, it would seem that their clients are more than happy with the service they are receiving, with this category seeing an increase in ratings by 33 basis points in the last 12 months. Asset Servicing takes second place, which similarly has seen an uptick in its score in the last 12 months.

Of course, it is SEB which dominates the Nordic markets, posting impressive results and seeing an increase in overall score for each market since 2023.

	Respondent Priorities
1st	Client Service
2nd	Asset Servicing
3rd	Relationship Management
4th	Account Management
5th	Pricing
6th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
7th	Cash Management and FX
8th	Regulation and Compliance
9th	Liquidity Management
10th	Technology
11th	Data Services
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

Nordics	2024	2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.89	5.53	5.83	0.07
Asset Safety and risk management	5.63	5.47	5.73	-0.10
Asset Servicing	5.61	5.29	5.59	0.02
Cash Management and FX	5.40	5.16	5.46	-0.06
Client Service	5.83	5.49	5.84	-0.01
Data Services	4.99	5.10	5.44	-0.45
Service Innovation	5.26	5.23	5.43	-0.18
Liquidity Management	5.06	5.02	5.41	-0.35
Pricing	5.06	5.05	5.20	-0.14
Regulation and Compliance	5.50	5.42	5.57	-0.07
Relationship Management	6.23	5.73	6.15	0.08
Securities Lending	4.64	5.12	5.17	-0.53
Technology	5.00	5.29	5.33	-0.33
Average	5.39	5.30	5.33	0.07

Denmark

Returning with an individual country write up after a five-year hiatus, Denmark has received the highest overall average score (5.42) amongst the Nordic countries. The total marks a marginal increase on last year, giving Denmark an overall rating of Good from our respondents.

Looking at the data, it is Relationship Management (6.33) that has the highest score, followed by Client Service (5.95). These two categories have also seen the largest uptick in overall rating. Excitingly, six categories have beaten the global average.

Data Services (4.87) and Securities Lending (4.64) have received the lowest scores, both seeing a downward shift since last year to now sit within the Satisfactory segment.

When it comes to client size, those within the $250 million-$1 billion range provide the highest ratings (6.23). It is also worth noting that no Danish respondents with an AUM of over $10 billion participated in this year's survey.

SEB

SEB has seen a significant increase in its overall rating since 2023, up 20 basis points from last year to reach 5.87. Much like the overall score in the country, it is Relationship Management which marks highest for SEB, with plenty of praise for its "knowledgeable and well-connected and dedicated" relationship management team and how it keeps its clients pro-actively informed of upcoming changes. This category also saw the largest annual uptick, rising 74 basis points to achieve a near perfect score.

Seven of the 13 categories have been rated as Very Good, with the remaining sitting within the Good segment.

The bank has seen a slight downward shift in three categories. Technology has seen the largest reduction (-0.37), though still sits in the Good range, with praise for the providers user-friendly "web interface tool CI Online" and easy-to-use tech functionalities.

Denmark	Denmark 2024	Denmark 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	SEB
Account Management	5.92	5.61	5.83	0.09	6.41
Asset Safety and risk management	5.51	5.53	5.73	-0.21	6.14
Asset Servicing	5.72	5.39	5.59	0.13	6.15
Cash Management and FX	5.57	5.27	5.46	0.11	6.18
Client Service	5.95	5.56	5.84	0.11	6.39
Data Services	4.87	5.14	5.44	-0.57	5.03
Service Innovation	5.20	5.38	5.43	-0.24	5.40
Liquidity Management	5.08	5.21	5.41	-0.34	5.62
Pricing	5.13	5.24	5.20	-0.07	5.52
Regulation and Compliance	5.60	5.47	5.57	0.04	6.04
Relationship Management	6.33	5.78	6.15	0.18	6.74
Securities Lending	4.64	5.29	5.17	-0.53	5.20
Technology	5.00	5.47	5.33	-0.33	5.49
Average	5.42	5.41	5.55	-0.12	5.87

Finland

Finland has also seen an uptick in its overall rating since last year, with its score rising 14 basis points to reach 5.40. Rated as Good by our respondents, nine of the 13 categories have seen an upward trend over the last 12 months.

Asset Servicing and Relationship Management have seen the largest annual shift, both increasing by 56 basis points, followed by Account Management which increased by 48 basis points. Relationship Management (6.29) and Account Management (6.03) received the highest ratings, with both categories sitting at Very Good.

Technology has received the lowest rating (4.63), dropping from 5.19 last year, and is also the category with the largest downward year-on-year shift.

It is worth noting that although BNP Paribas did not quite meet the threshold for a full write up, with an overall average score of 6.13. this provider has a strong presence in Finland.

SEB

With its overall rating at 5.85, firmly above both Finland's and the global average score, it has been a strong 12 months for SEB in the country. With five of the 13 categories being rated as Very Good, all bar one have seen an uptick in rating this year. Technology has seen a slight downward shift, falling 35 basis points year-on-year, though there is praise for how user friendly SEB's online presence is.

Relationship Management (6.74) has seen the largest positive shift, as well as having the highest score, however it is Asset Safety and Risk Management which is particularly interesting. Rated as Good last year, this year this category has seen quite the jump in its rating from clients, pushing it into the Very Good Range, with the second largest growth on the previous year. Perhaps this increase is due to SEB's ability to "advise on any issue" - as clients pointed out – with others heaping praise for "safekeeping assets and managing risk".

Finland	Finland 2024	Finland 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	SEB
Account Management	6.03	5.55	5.83	0.20	6.59
Asset Safety and risk management	5.81	5.50	5.73	0.09	6.35
Asset Servicing	5.76	5.20	5.59	0.17	6.15
Cash Management and FX	5.31	4.94	5.46	-0.16	5.85
Client Service	5.87	5.48	5.84	0.03	6.40
Data Services	4.81	5.06	5.44	-0.63	4.97
Service Innovation	5.20	5.26	5.43	-0.24	5.40
Liquidity Management	5.08	4.94	5.41	-0.34	5.62
Pricing	5.12	5.05	5.20	-0.09	5.52
Regulation and Compliance	5.58	5.45	5.57	0.01	6.04
Relationship Management	6.29	5.73	6.15	0.14	6.74
Securities Lending	4.70	5.00	5.17	-0.47	5.50
Technology	4.63	5.19	5.33	-0.70	4.94
Average	5.40	5.26	5.55	-0.15	5.85

Norway

There is quite a diverse range of ratings when it comes to the Norwegian market this year, leading to an overall rating of 5.37. As well as this, there is an impressive spread when it comes to client size, with clients within the $250million-$1billion AUM bracket scoring providers highest.

Norway sits just below the global average in the majority of categories, with some notable year-on-year increases across the categories. Relationship Management (6.15) has seen the most significant increase and has received the highest score this year being pushed into the Very Good range.

It is worth noting BNP Paribas also has somewhat of a presence in Norway, beating the market average with an average score 5.42, although not quite reaching the threshold for a full write up.

SEB

Alongside Norway's overall score seeing an improvement, SEB has experienced its own uptick. With two categories rated as Very Good, only three have seen a negative shift in ratings this year.

While it will come as little surprise that Relationship Management has had the largest uptick in ratings, it is Data Services which is perhaps more interesting. Having increased by an impressive 68 basis points, clients are quick to sing their praises about SEB's data services. One respondent comments how they "really appreciate the various documents provided about the markets and services" while SEB is also praised for how it "clearly describes the major information necessary to understand the local rules and processes". It would seem there is plenty of appreciation for this provider making the process as user-friendly and easy to understand as possible.

Norway seems like the most appropriate part of this survey to wish SEB's sub custody sales and relationship manager, Ulf Noren, a happy retirement after spending almost two decades working at the Nordic bank.

Norway	Norway 2024	Norway 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	SEB
Account Management	5.85	5.46	5.83	0.02	6.29
Asset Safety and risk management	5.60	5.50	5.73	-0.13	5.77
Asset Servicing	5.42	5.27	5.59	-0.17	5.52
Cash Management and FX	5.38	5.21	5.46	-0.09	5.77
Client Service	5.78	5.42	5.84	-0.06	5.94
Data Services	5.18	5.13	5.44	-0.26	5.88
Service Innovation	5.16	5.16	5.43	-0.28	5.58
Liquidity Management	5.06	4.94	5.41	-0.35	5.62
Pricing	4.99	5.00	5.20	-0.21	5.16
Regulation and Compliance	5.49	5.41	5.57	-0.08	5.69
Relationship Management	6.15	5.67	6.15	0.00	6.55
Securities Lending	4.62	5.20	5.17	-0.55	5.20
Technology	5.14	5.26	5.33	-0.18	5.69
Average	5.37	5.28	5.55	-0.18	5.74

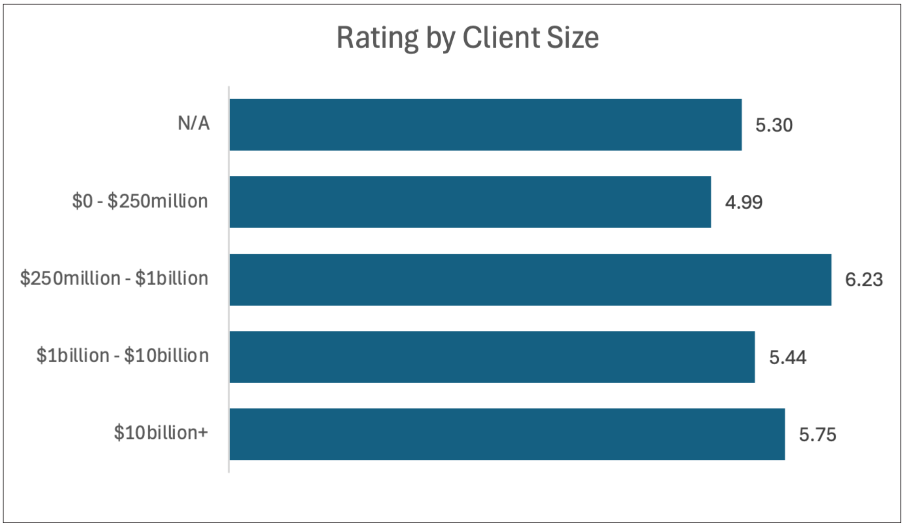
Sweden

With the majority of ratings sitting within the Good range, and an overall rating of 5.38, only Relationship Management (6.16) has shifted up into the Very Good Range.

Much like the other Nordic countries, there is quite the spread of client size this year – although again it is clients within the $250million-$1billion bracket which have rated providers in Sweden the highest (6.23).

Three categories have seen a slight decline in ratings in the last 12 months. The Securities Lending's score has dropped by 0.38, while the other two – Regulation and Compliance (down 0.02) and Technology (down 0.08) saw marginal falls.

BNP Paribas almost reached the threshold for a full write up, with an average score of 5.44. This provider has beaten the market, regional and global average, with both Relationship Management and Account Management sitting in the Very Good range (6.00 - 6.99).



SEB

SEB has had quite the year, scoring an average of 5.99 to sit just shy of the Very Good range. The provider will be pleased to see that every single category has seen an uptick in rating this year, while an impressive seven of 13 categories score above 6.00. This is up from just two, in 2023.

Data Services has seen that largest annual increase – increasing by 88 basis points. This is followed by Service Innovation (up 0.78) and Relationship Management (up 0.68). When it comes to Relationship Management however, this improvement in scores is largely based upon the providers "excellent client focus", according to one respondent.

Sweden	Sweden 2024	Sweden 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	SEB
Account Management	5.78	5.55	5.83	-0.04	6.50
Asset Safety and risk management	5.57	5.37	5.73	-0.16	6.18
Asset Servicing	5.53	5.30	5.59	-0.06	5.95
Cash Management and FX	5.38	5.22	5.46	-0.09	6.18
Client Service	5.72	5.55	5.84	-0.11	6.25
Data Services	5.14	5.07	5.44	-0.30	5.88
Service Innovation	5.47	5.12	5.43	0.03	6.16
Liquidity Management	5.05	5.00	5.41	-0.36	5.62
Pricing	5.02	4.95	5.20	-0.19	5.41
Regulation and Compliance	5.33	5.35	5.57	-0.24	5.79
Relationship Management	6.16	5.77	6.15	0.00	6.68
Securities Lending	4.62	5.00	5.17	-0.55	5.20
Technology	5.18	5.26	5.33	-0.14	6.13
Average	5.38	5.27	5.55	-0.17	5.99

Oceania

The Australian Custodial Services Association (ACSA) kindly compiles industry statistics on a bi-annual basis and over the past 12 months assets under custody for foreign clients increased from AU$ 1.8 trillion to over $2.1 trillion.

For the only provider featured in this Oceania section – BNP Paribas – its sub-custody assets grew 13.4% over the period of December 2023-June 2024.

The bumpy ride that has been the Australian stock exchange's (ASX) post-trade replacement continued to rumble on again over the past year. The most recent update on the matter was the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) opening proceedings against the ASX for allegedly making misleading statements related to the replacement project of its clearing and settlement systems (CHESS).

In some progressive news though, ASX did announce that it is set to replace its cash equities clearing and settlement platform with Tata Consultancy Services' (TCS) platform, a proactive step in overhauling the post-trade offering after its six-year long blockchain ambitions came to an abrupt end in 2022.

First announced in 2016, following years of delays, ambiguity and market criticism, ASX abandoned the project

in November 2022. In the new lawsuit, ASIC alleges statements made in ASX announcements on 10 February 2022 that the project remained "on-track for go-live" in April 2023 and was "progressing well" were misleading.

When it comes to the regional score – which encompasses New Zealand as well – there has been a slight downward shift in Oceania's overall regional mark, though still remains strong at 5.21. Relationship Management (5.74) received the highest score, followed by Account Management at 5.70.

	Respondent Priorities
1st	Client Service
2nd	Relationship Management
3rd	Asset Servicing
4th	Account Management
5th	Pricing
6th	Cash Management and FX
7th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
8th	Regulation and Compliance
9th	Technology
10th	Data Services
11th	Liquidity Management
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

While Securities Lending has received the lowest score this year, this category is sits in one of the lower slots when it comes to what a client considers to be most important.

What is particularly noteworthy is that Account Management (5.70) has seen the largest uptick in ratings since 2023, jumping 20 basis points.

Oceania	2024	2023	Global Average	Difference to Global
Account Management	5.70	5.50	5.83	-0.12
Asset Safety and risk management	5.41	5.46	5.73	-0.32
Asset Servicing	5.33	5.46	5.59	-0.27
Cash Management and FX	5.07	5.17	5.46	-0.40
Client Service	5.66	5.59	5.84	-0.18
Data Services	5.04	5.49	5.44	-0.40
Service Innovation	5.06	5.20	5.43	-0.38
Liquidity Management	4.92	5.00	5.41	-0.49
Pricing	4.99	5.00	5.20	-0.22
Regulation and Compliance	5.16	5.34	5.57	-0.41
Relationship Management	5.74	5.81	6.15	-0.41
Securities Lending	4.69	5.35	5.17	-0.47
Technology	5.01	5.19	5.33	-0.31
Average	5.21	5.35	5.55	-0.34

Australia

Australia has seen a slight dip in its overall rating. However, with a 5.16, the Australian average is within the Good range. There are two noteworthy points when it comes to Australia's scores – firstly it is Account Management which has seen the largest uptick this quarter, which also pushes it into first place (it was sitting at fifth highest score in 2023). Meanwhile, at the other end of the spectrum both Securities Lending and Data Services have seen significant downward shifts – falling 74 and 62 basis points, respectively.

BNP Paribas

Sitting comfortably at Good, BNP Paribas has had a good year, with Account Management (6.11) after seeing the largest uptick in ratings since 2023. When it comes to this category BNP's clients are quick to praise its "excellent coverage" however, the standout comment is how "the settlement of daily trades with exchange is very smooth" with the respondent continuing "the client service team is very helpful and they can provide information in timely manner".

BNP Paribas highlighted to GC Research that it has "substantially reinforced our footprint in the different regions, which enables us to deploy new account management models, leveraging both our local teams and our international operational centres in each main time zone". It is clear that our respondents appreciate these improvements.

Of course, there has been a decline in ratings for a few categories too – most notably for Securities Lending and Service Innovation. One client has a slight grumble in the comments: "when cancelling/rejecting client corp[orate] action instructions additional notification (i.e. email/phone calls) can be sent instead of solely rely on the SWIFT message communication." Another notes they are looking for more regular updates.

Australia	Australia 2024	Australia 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP
Account Management	5.61	5.47	5.83	-0.22	6.11
Asset Safety and risk management	5.37	5.50	5.73	-0.35	5.83
Asset Servicing	5.27	5.37	5.59	-0.32	5.39
Cash Management and FX	5.07	5.21	5.46	-0.40	5.11
Client Service	5.57	5.53	5.84	-0.27	5.96
Data Services	4.99	5.61	5.44	-0.45	5.57
Service Innovation	5.01	5.28	5.43	-0.42	4.88
Liquidity Management	4.87	5.00	5.41	-0.54	4.95
Pricing	4.90	5.08	5.20	-0.31	5.24
Regulation and Compliance	5.11	5.42	5.57	-0.46	5.43
Relationship Management	5.59	5.77	6.15	-0.56	6.13
Securities Lending	4.72	5.46	5.17	-0.44	4.84
Technology	4.98	5.28	5.33	-0.34	5.43
Average	5.16	5.38	5.55	-0.39	5.45

New Zealand

New Zealand's overall rating remains largely unchanged from last year, with the majority of categories sitting firmly in the Good category (5.00 – 5.99). Although sitting just below the global average, eight of the 13 categories have seen an uptick in ratings since 2023, with another one remaining the same. It is Account Management which has seen the most significant uptick, sitting at 5.86, although once again it is Relationship Management (5.99) which has received the highest score.

BNP Paribas

With an overall rating of 5.39, seven of the 13 categories have seen an uptick since 2023. Asset Safety and Risk Management has seen that largest shift, due in part to client's confidence in BNP's "constant monitoring of the accounts". Account Management (6.11) and Technology (5.43) have also seen notable increases in ratings this year. In fact, when it comes to Account Management clients are quick to praise the provider for how it is "very friendly and professional, they know the market well".

Technology is of particular interest, with BNP Paribas highlighting its "integration with Bloomberg AIM to enhance post-trade workflows" with the goal of providing mutual clients with "seamless front-to-back workflows and standardised data connectivity to support efficient trade management".

On the other hand, both Service Innovation and Securities Lending have seen significant drop in ratings by 43 basis points.

New Zealand	New Zealand 2024	New Zealand 2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	BNP
Account Management	5.86	5.55	5.83	0.03	6.11
Asset Safety and risk management	5.46	5.40	5.73	-0.27	5.83
Asset Servicing	5.41	5.57	5.59	-0.18	5.39
Cash Management and FX	5.08	5.12	5.46	-0.39	5.11
Client Service	5.79	5.67	5.84	-0.05	5.96
Data Services	5.13	5.31	5.44	-0.31	5.43
Service Innovation	5.12	5.11	5.43	-0.31	4.88
Liquidity Management	5.00	5.00	5.41	-0.41	4.95
Pricing	5.12	4.90	5.20	-0.08	5.24
Regulation and Compliance	5.26	5.22	5.57	-0.31	5.29
Relationship Management	5.99	5.86	6.15	-0.16	6.13
Securities Lending	4.66	5.20	5.17	-0.51	4.37
Technology	5.07	5.06	5.33	-0.26	5.43
Average	5.30	5.31	5.55	-0.25	5.39

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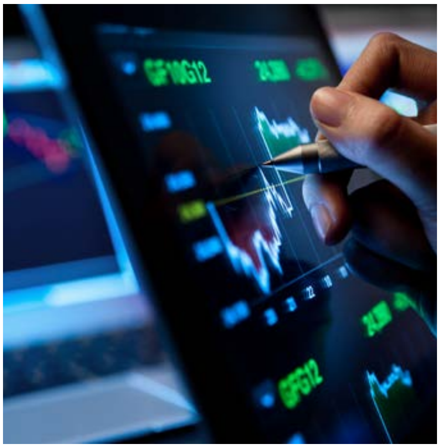
ICSD

Once again, the three ICSDs are to be treated as their own individual market in this year's Agent Banks in Major Markets survey. While ICSDs are not sub-custodians in the traditional sense, they do provide a range of similar services, both domestically and cross-border, throughout their servicing structures – earning them a write-up in our survey.

Over the last five years, the ICSDs have maintained a tradition of high levels of service, sitting well above the global average and this year is no exception. With an average score of 6.06, this represents a 16 basis point improvement on 2023, and currently sits heads and shoulders above the global average (5.55). This uptick in rating suggests that perhaps for certain types of investors, they are seen as a viable alternative to local custodians.

Euroclear states that its goal is to "to provide the same ease of access and degree of asset protection expected by international investors in any well-established market," while SIX comments that "in addition to the ICSDs (Clearstream and Euroclear), we also envisage our competition emerging primarily from local and regional custodians".

When assessing the data, the ICSD triumvirate has beaten the global average for every category, with Relationship



Management (6.55) scoring the highest. It is worth noting that this category ranks third in the list of client priorities. Client Service is rated as the most important by our respondents; something clearly recognised by the ICSDs, which collectively score an average of 6.39 within this category.

Securities Lending, sits lowest on clients list of priorities. Despite this, the latter is rated as Very Good in this year's survey, highlighting the firms' commitment to providing excellent service.

Pricing (5.55) has the lowest score – something that will come as little surprise. Even then, this category has a

	Respondent Priorities
1st	Client Service
2nd	Asset Servicing
3rd	Relationship Management
4th	Account Management
5th	Pricing
6th	Asset Safety and Risk Management
7th	Regulation and Compliance
8th	Technology
9th	Cash Management and FX
10th	Data Services
11th	Liquidity Management
12th	Service Innovation
13th	Securities Lending

strong score of Good.

Only one category has seen a downward shift since 2023: Asset Servicing – which lists second in the top client priorities. But again this only fell by 0.04 to score 5.91. Here might be an area where providers may need to focus some attention.

Clearstream
With an overall rating of 4.83, Clearstream sits within the Satisfactory range, however there are still some positive developments when it comes to its service offerings. Relationship Management (5.74) has the highest score and has seen an uptick of 49 basis points in the last 12 months. While there have been slight declines in some categories, it's encouraging to see that several areas have experienced increases. Importantly, every category is still rated as either Good or Satisfactory, indicating a solid level of service that clients appreciate.

Euroclear Bank
When it comes to the services offered by Euroclear, Relationship Management, Account Management and Client Service all three sit in the Very Good range. With encouraging insights from clients for Relationship Management and Client Service, one respondent commends the firm's "excellent co-operation and professional assistance also in complex requirements" and its "first class service".

When it comes to Technology, Euroclear has seen a slight decline in the segment's rating, however its difficult to fault the ICSD's efforts in looking to the future when it comes to this category. Euroclear has been involved in a range of pilots and initiatives throughout the world to harness new technologies and is also working with Clearstream and DTCC to establish standards for the digital asset infrastructure of the future.

SIX Securities Services
It has been quite the year for SIX, a serial outperformer in this survey over the years, with an average overall score of 6.40 – up from 2023 and above the global average. It is also worth noting that this provider has received the highest number of respondents.

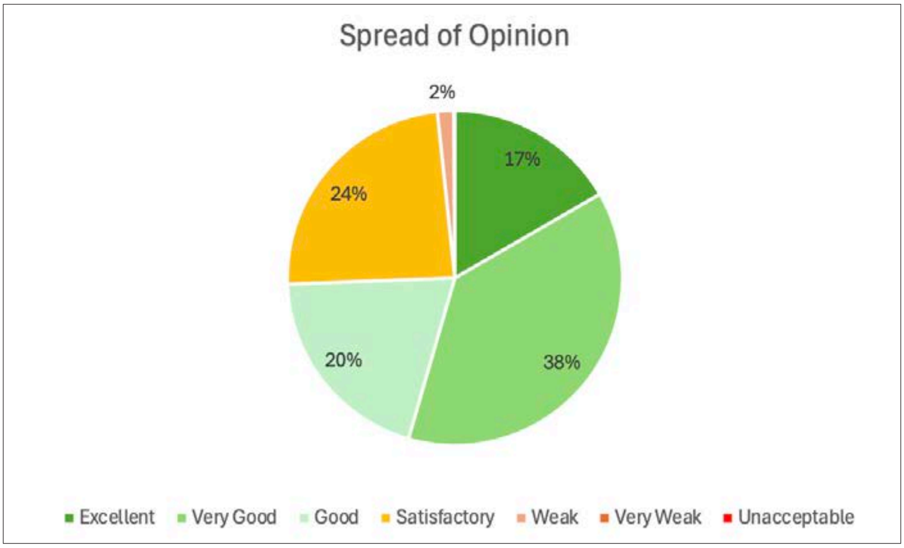
Only one category, Pricing, is not rated above 6.00 – and even then, it sits at 5.91. There is also promising feedback from clients when it comes to Pricing due to SIX's "flexibility, offering competitive prices, and willingness to host consultations". It will come as little surprise that Relationship Management and Client Services have received the highest scores, and interestingly they have also seen the largest uptick in ratings since 2023.

ICSD	2024	2023	Global Average	Difference to Global	Clearstream Bank	Euroclear Bank	SIX
Account Management	6.39	6.11	5.83	0.56	5.22	6.20	6.66
Asset Safety and risk management	6.23	6.03	5.73	0.50	5.29	5.83	6.48
Asset Servicing	5.91	5.96	5.59	0.32	4.29	5.30	6.36
Cash Management and FX	6.01	5.87	5.46	0.54	5.05	5.43	6.32
Client Service	6.39	6.06	5.84	0.55	4.75	6.10	6.77
Data Services	5.88	5.80	5.44	0.44	4.74	5.23	6.23
Service Innovation	5.93	5.83	5.43	0.49	4.95	5.42	6.22
Liquidity Management	6.01	5.81	5.41	0.60	4.47	4.99	6.43
Pricing	5.55	5.52	5.20	0.35	4.48	4.87	5.91
Regulation and Compliance	6.09	5.92	5.57	0.53	4.92	5.59	6.47
Relationship Management	6.55	6.18	6.15	0.39	5.74	6.21	6.79
Securities Lending	6.03	5.81	5.17	0.86	4.00	4.90	6.39
Technology	5.86	5.84	5.33	0.54	4.85	5.43	6.15
Average	6.06	5.90	5.55	0.51	4.83	5.50	6.40

BNP Paribas

BNP Paribas received the highest number of responses across the survey from a broad range of clients, from the Americas, Europe, and Asia-Pacific.

On a global level, BNP Paribas' securities services business has seen some notable changes. At the time of writing, in just the last month it had launched its ESG investment compliance monitoring solution in Australia and New Zealand , seen several changes in senior positions, been appointed as depositary bank for PAI Partners' eighth flagship fund, PAI Partners VIII, representing €7.1 billion and been selected to provide custodial services to Versorgungswerk der Zahnärztekammer Nordrhein (VZN), which manages assets of roughly €5 billion.



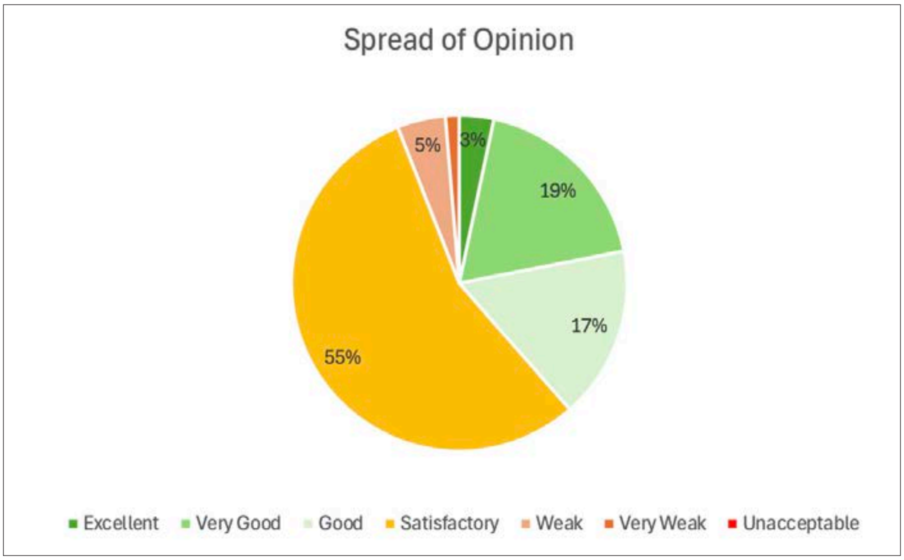
Taking a look at the data, BNP Paribas sits firmly in the Good range, and when it comes to Asset Safety and Risk Management (5.87) and Data Services (5.47) both categories have beaten the global average by 14 basis points and 4 basis points, respectively.

However, what is worth noting here is that BNP Paribas is rated as Excellent or Very Good by over half (54%) of its clients, with a further 20% rating it Good. When looking at the more general comments, one client comments: "BNP on the whole offer a good service, they're a good custodian and [we have] just re-appointed."

Citi

Citi is back once again in the multi-market section of our report, following an exciting few months. Back in August 2024, Citibank streamlined its US stock settlement for Korean Investors meaning, retail and institutional investors in Korea can now have their US stock sale proceeds credited the next business day in line with the US' T+1 settlement cycle. Meanwhile Citi was selected by the Taiwan Depository & Clearing Corporation for global custody services as the Asian infrastructure implements a new centralised custody platform in the market.

As one of the prominent voices in educating the industry on the reduction in settlement time for North America, Citi followed up its efforts pre-May 2024 with a report this September which found that the transition to T+1 was harder than expected, with reduction in clearing margin a key challenge for custodians.



With 26 clients taking the time to rate their provider, Citi had respondents based in Europe, Asia and North America. The asset servicer's spread of ratings is interesting. Asset Safety and Risk Management (5.35) was the highest scoring category for the bank, followed by Relationship Management (5.30) and Regulation and Compliance (5.27).

Looking at the overall spread of opinion, over a third of respondents rated Citi as either Excellent, Very Good or Good.

Deutsche Bank

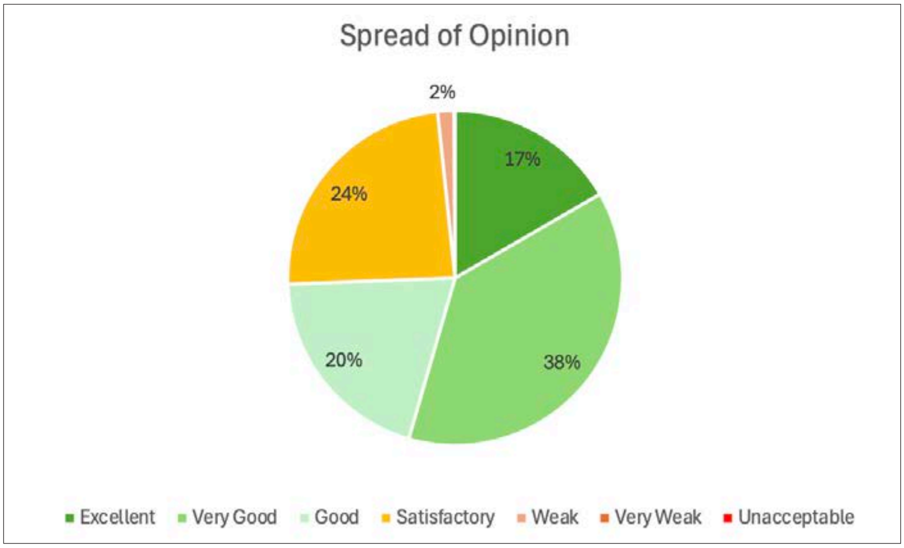
In Asia, Deutsche Bank became the first custodian to roll out Proximity's VCG proxy voting solution, while a tie-up with ascending fintech Saphyre saw the implementation of a new onboarding and maintenance platform for custody, broker trading and buy-side accounts – joining the likes of Northern Trust and Standard Chartered.

Elsewhere, the servicer joined the boundary-pushing Project Guardian initiative in May, a collaborative tokenisation initiative established by the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS).

The strategy at Deutsche Bank appears to be working under the steer of its leadership, with Global Custodian referring to the bank's securities services story as 'one of renaissance' earlier this year, with multiple global custodian clients reportedly turning to the asset servicer – particularly across Asia.

Sitting comfortably above the global average (5.55) with an overall rating of 5.86, Deutsche Bank has seen a strong performance in 2024. With the category ratings all within the Good (5.00 – 5.99) and Very Good (6.00 – 6.99) range, it is Relationship Management which has received the highest score at 6.32. Also, of particular importance is that all except one category has beaten the global average, and even then, Liquidity Management (5.39) sits only 2 basis points below the global average for this category.

Given these impressive ratings, it will come as little surprise that just under half (46%) of Deutsche Bank's clients have rated the provider as Excellent or Very Good, with a further 23% rating it as Good.

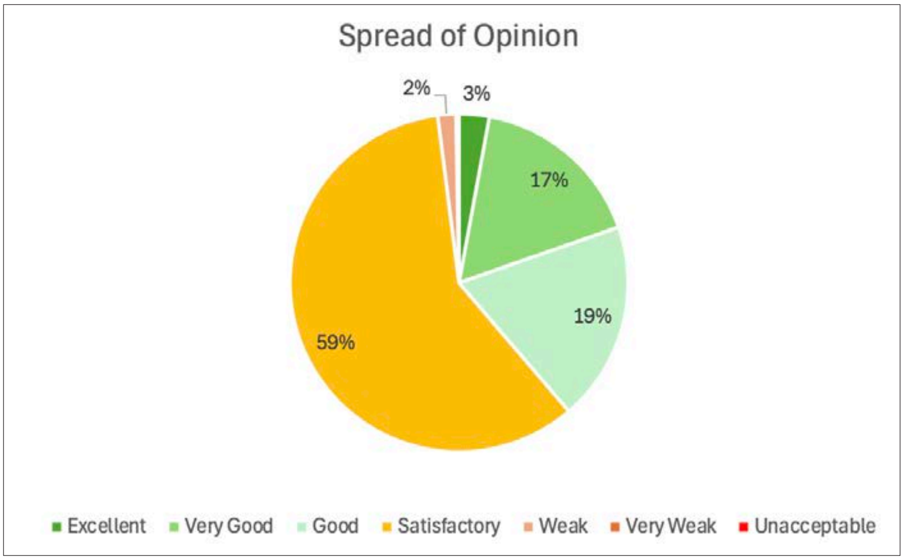


HSBC

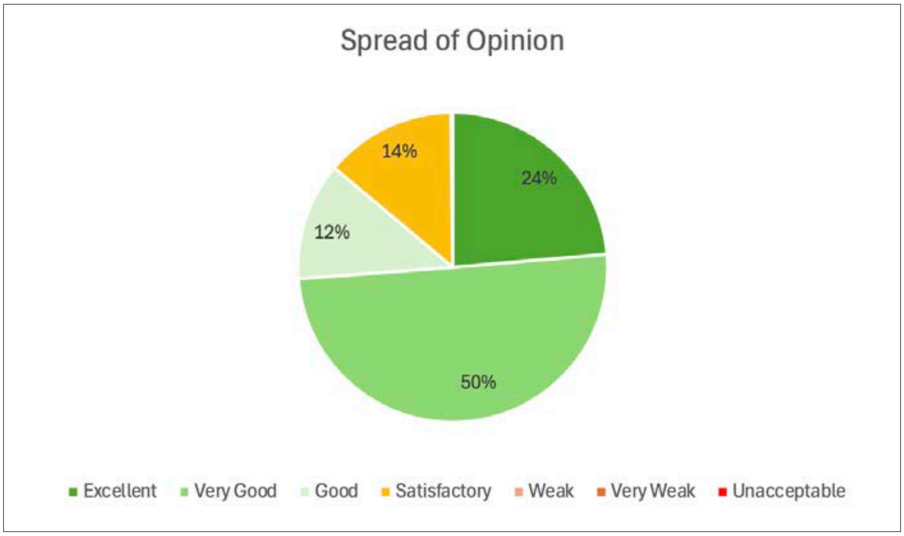
HSBC is clearly refining its focus, having sold off hedge fund administration business to BNP Paribas. The firm is investing (see Orion project) and honing its focus on Asia. The strategy led to multiple milestones over the past 12 months.

Some of its recent announcements include supporting Saudi Arabia-China ETF cross listing as asset servicer, with the asset servicer acting as the ETF partner for the CSOP Saudi Arabia ETF master fund in Hong Kong. The custodian also took part in multiple tokenisation initiatives across Singapore and Hong Kong, and facilitated a landmark securities transaction for Qatar Stock Exchange and Edaa Qatar.

When assessing the bank's performance in this year's survey, scores for this year sit below the global average. Relationship Management (5.11) scored highest for the provider, followed by Asset Safety and Risk Management (5.03) and Technology (5.03) which sit in joint second place. The data points to some improvement on the bank's scores in 2023, with over a fifth of collated scores sitting within the Excellent or Very Good range.



Intesa Sanpaolo

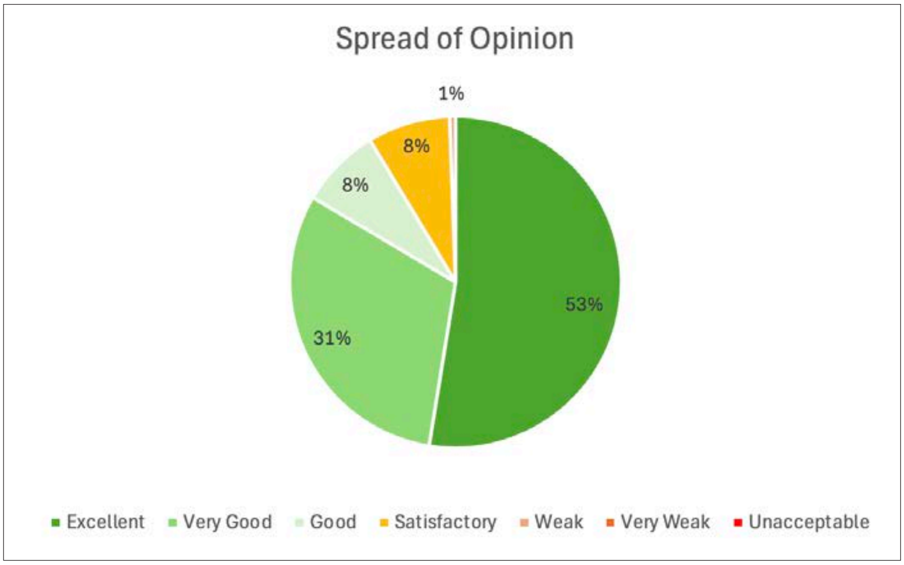


This year, Intesa Sanpaolo tells Global Custodian it has been focusing on "offering a range of innovative, customised, integrated solutions for custody, securities administration, settlement and clearing of the securities operations". The provider is currently a participant in Cassa di Compensazione e Garanzia – the Italian CCP – for equities and bond sections and is a direct participant (DCP) in T2S for the Italian, German and ESES (France, Belgium and the Netherlands) markets. This offers the provider significant advantages when it comes to position clearing routines, flexible pricing structures and reconciliation of transactions, captured from the market, as well as many others.

Intesa Sanpaolo sits comfortably above the global average at 5.91, at the top end of the Good range. With a handful of categories in the Very Good range, it is Relationship Management which has the highest score at 6.33. Intesa Sanpaolo has outperformed the global average in every category, with the exception of Liquidity Management (5.35). Even then, this category is only 6 basis points below the average.

With almost three quarters (74%) of clients rating Intesa Sanpaolo as Excellent or Very Good this is an impressive performance from the provider.

Standard Chartered Bank



With the highest score within the multi-market providers this year, Standard Chartered Bank have an average overall score of 6.22, with all bar two categories sitting within the Very Good Range (6.00 – 6.99). Even then, Pricing and Securities Lending have been rated 5.95 and 5.94 respectively, just off the Very Good mark and comfortably ahead of the global averages for those categories.

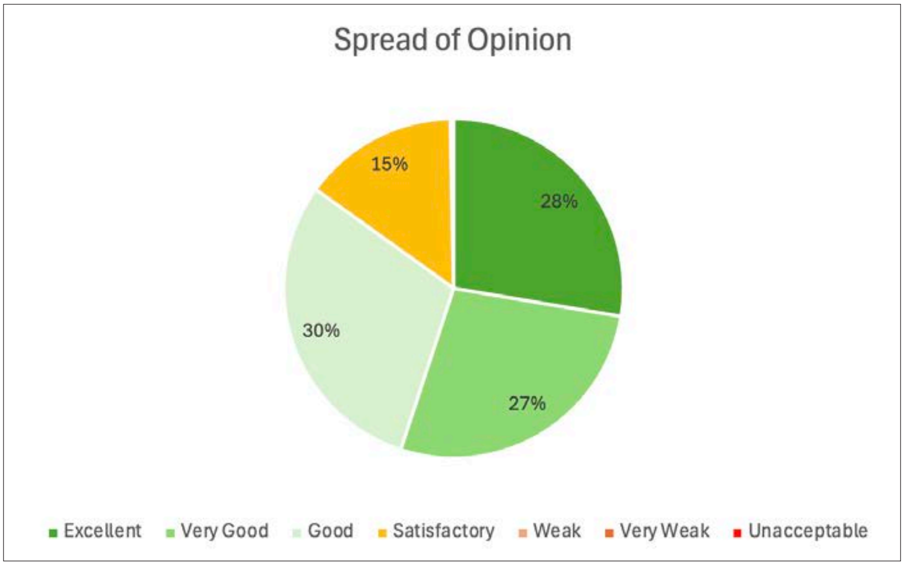
Account Management received the highest score (6.61), 78 basis points above the global average. Technology, with a score of 6.18, has the greatest difference ahead of the global average, beating it by 86 basis points.

It will come as little surprise then that 53% of SCB's clients have rated their provider as Excellent, with a further 39% rating it as Very Good or Good. One accompanying comment points to the great work being done by the bank, noting: "It is not considered a service provider to us, but a business partner that we would like to continue building relationships with in the future."

UBS

All of the categories for UBS currently sit between Good and Very Good, with Relationship Management (6.43) receiving the highest score. Excitingly, four categories are also outperforming the global average – Asset Servicing, Service Innovation, Liquidity Management, and Relationship Management. Relationship Management is in fact 28 basis points above the global average this year.

When it comes to the spread of client opinion, over half (55%) rated UBS as either Excellent or Very Good, with a further 30% rating this provider as Good. Overall, UBS' overall score comes in 10 basis points below the global average.



Methodology: Multi-markets

For Global Custodian's multi-market section, to get a write up, providers must have a minimum 10 responses across at least five different markets. As a result, some providers which appear in the country write ups will also appear in this section, allowing us to see how the provider as a whole has performed, and not just in a specific market or region.

AUSTRALIA	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	6.11	5.83	5.39	5.11	5.96	5.57	4.88	4.95	5.24	5.43	6.13	4.84	5.43	5.45
Market Average	5.61	5.37	5.27	5.07	5.57	4.99	5.01	4.87	4.90	5.11	5.59	4.72	4.98	5.16
Oceania Average	5.70	5.41	5.33	5.07	5.66	5.04	5.06	4.92	4.99	5.16	5.74	4.69	5.01	5.21
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

AUSTRIA	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.98	6.04	5.31	5.09	5.78	5.27	5.10	5.33	5.09	5.27	5.96	4.33	4.96	5.35
Market Average	5.43	5.48	5.32	4.99	5.54	4.95	4.85	4.89	4.92	5.17	5.72	4.35	4.79	5.11
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

BELGIUM	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.73	5.76	5.52	5.56	5.72	5.72	5.45	5.86	4.91	5.50	6.03	5.46	5.36	5.58
Market Average	5.64	5.61	5.50	5.37	5.68	5.47	5.31	5.49	5.02	5.45	5.97	5.41	5.28	5.48
Intesa Sanpaolo	6.24	5.76	5.94	5.68	5.94	5.67	5.50	5.20	5.38	5.76	6.24	6.00	5.88	5.78
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

CANADA	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
North America Average	5.60	5.58	5.46	5.28	5.56	5.08	5.21	5.14	5.33	5.48	5.94	5.09	5.14	5.38
Market Average	6.08	5.68	5.67	5.54	5.89	5.21	5.08	5.46	5.15	5.79	6.35	5.63	4.98	5.58
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

DENMARK	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
SEB	6.41	6.14	6.15	6.18	6.39	5.03	5.40	5.62	5.52	6.04	6.74	5.20	5.49	5.87
Market Average	5.92	5.51	5.72	5.57	5.95	4.87	5.20	5.08	5.13	5.60	6.33	4.64	5.00	5.42
Nordics Average	5.89	5.63	5.61	5.40	5.83	4.99	5.26	5.06	5.06	5.50	6.23	4.64	5.00	5.39
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

FINLAND	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
SEB	6.59	6.35	6.15	5.85	6.40	4.97	5.40	5.62	5.52	6.04	6.74	5.50	4.94	5.85
Market Average	6.03	5.81	5.76	5.31	5.87	4.81	5.20	5.08	5.12	5.58	6.29	4.70	4.63	5.40
Nordics Average	5.89	5.63	5.61	5.40	5.83	4.99	5.26	5.06	5.06	5.50	6.23	4.64	5.00	5.39
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

FRANCE	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.86	5.87	5.59	5.41	5.75	5.58	5.36	5.38	4.92	5.34	5.89	5.17	5.33	5.50
Intesa Sanpaolo	6.24	5.76	5.94	5.68	6.24	5.67	5.50	5.20	5.38	5.76	6.24	6.00	5.88	5.81
Market Average	5.59	5.54	5.46	5.20	5.59	5.28	5.26	5.09	4.91	5.30	5.94	5.02	5.19	5.34
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

GERMANY	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.77	6.10	5.89	5.21	5.64	5.52	5.09	5.38	5.00	5.33	5.96	5.16	5.14	5.48
Deutsche Bank	6.11	5.96	5.93	5.41	6.34	5.53	5.70	5.38	5.24	5.85	6.47	5.73	5.12	5.75
Intesa Sanpaolo	5.92	5.64	5.68	5.81	5.92	6.16	6.00	5.60	5.38	5.92	6.16	6.00	6.08	5.87
UBS	5.84	5.72	5.74	5.71	5.84	5.63	5.52	5.88	5.35	5.65	6.83	3.48	5.34	5.58
Market Average	5.67	5.73	5.59	5.38	5.76	5.51	5.33	5.41	5.16	5.45	6.35	4.86	5.13	5.49
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

HONG KONG	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.85	5.85	5.50	5.45	5.80	5.60	5.30	5.20	4.25	4.60	5.85	4.11	5.25	5.28
DBS	5.88	6.07	5.90	5.78	5.98	5.93	5.90	5.82	5.78	6.02	5.95	5.72	5.85	5.89
Deutche Bank	6.00	5.86	5.76	5.84	6.03	4.89	5.32	5.14	4.84	5.45	5.53	7.00	4.95	5.58
Standard Chartered Bank	6.61	6.27	5.61	5.75	5.78	6.06	5.93	5.95	5.85	6.27	6.46	6.00	6.15	6.05
UBS	5.90	5.74	5.57	5.46	5.88	5.37	5.34	5.77	5.26	5.68	6.60	4.28	5.45	5.56
Market Average	5.89	5.79	5.50	5.51	5.75	5.46	5.44	5.55	5.25	5.64	6.14	4.98	5.46	5.57
Asia Average	6.07	5.91	5.81	5.72	6.08	5.71	5.73	5.71	5.51	5.80	6.36	5.49	5.69	5.81
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

ICSD	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
Clearstream Bank	5.22	5.29	4.29	5.05	4.75	4.74	4.95	4.47	4.48	4.92	5.74	4.00	4.85	4.83
Euroclear Bank SA/NV	6.20	5.83	5.30	5.43	6.10	5.23	5.42	4.99	4.87	5.59	6.21	4.90	5.43	5.50
SIX	6.66	6.48	6.36	6.32	6.77	6.23	6.22	6.43	5.91	6.47	6.79	6.39	6.15	6.40
Market Average	6.39	6.23	5.91	6.01	6.39	5.88	5.93	6.01	5.55	6.09	6.55	6.03	5.86	6.06
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

IRELAND	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
Market Average	5.12	5.48	5.11	5.13	5.21	5.13	5.18	5.01	5.05	5.43	5.87	3.71	4.98	5.11
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

ISRAEL	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
Bank Leumi le-Israel	6.71	5.86	6.00	5.86	6.57	5.86	5.50	5.71	5.86	6.57	6.57	n/a	5.50	6.05
Market Average	5.33	4.85	5.18	4.70	5.45	4.93	5.11	4.74	4.95	5.30	5.73	4.50	4.31	5.01
Asia Average	6.07	5.91	5.81	5.72	6.08	5.71	5.73	5.71	5.51	5.80	6.36	5.49	5.69	5.81
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

ITALY	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.62	5.61	5.35	5.16	5.74	5.26	5.05	5.21	4.76	5.24	5.98	4.76	5.16	5.30
Instesa Sanpaolo	6.48	6.09	6.13	5.66	6.48	5.73	6.19	5.32	5.69	5.83	6.46	5.00	5.64	5.90
Market Average	5.78	5.68	5.60	5.28	5.89	5.39	5.41	5.22	5.05	5.45	6.14	4.89	5.28	5.47
Southern Europe Average	5.70	5.59	5.53	5.28	5.81	5.31	5.38	5.22	4.99	5.41	6.08	4.85	5.16	5.41
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

JAPAN	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
MUFG	6.74	6.00	5.74	5.68	6.80	6.00	5.41	5.83	5.00	5.65	7.00	5.00	6.00	5.91
Mizuho Bank	7.00	6.74	6.91	6.91	7.00	6.73	6.91	6.66	6.91	6.78	7.00	7.00	6.84	6.88
Market Average	6.61	6.29	6.38	6.34	6.65	6.26	6.30	6.19	6.07	6.23	6.77	6.78	6.25	6.39
Asia Average	6.07	5.91	5.81	5.72	6.08	5.71	5.73	5.71	5.51	5.80	6.36	5.49	5.69	5.81
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

KOREA	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
Standard Chartered Bank	6.77	6.32	6.24	5.85	6.85	6.47	6.47	5.92	5.67	6.32	6.98	6.40	6.37	6.36
Market Average	6.23	5.87	5.81	5.51	6.34	5.93	5.93	5.30	5.21	5.87	6.44	5.38	5.76	5.81
Asia Average	6.07	5.91	5.81	5.72	6.08	5.71	5.73	5.71	5.51	5.80	6.36	5.49	5.69	5.81
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

LUXEMBOURG	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
Market Average	5.57	5.48	5.17	5.21	5.72	5.05	5.05	5.26	4.78	5.20	5.86	4.40	4.70	5.19
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

NEW ZEALAND	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	6.11	5.83	5.39	5.11	5.96	5.43	4.88	4.95	5.24	5.29	6.13	4.37	5.43	5.39
Market Average	5.86	5.46	5.41	5.08	5.79	5.13	5.12	5.00	5.12	5.26	5.99	4.66	5.07	5.30
Oceania Average	5.70	5.41	5.33	5.07	5.66	5.04	5.06	4.92	4.99	5.16	5.74	4.69	5.01	5.21
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

NORWAY	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
SEB	6.29	5.77	5.52	5.77	5.94	5.88	5.58	5.62	5.16	5.69	6.55	5.20	5.69	5.74
Market Average	5.85	5.60	5.42	5.38	5.78	5.18	5.16	5.06	4.99	5.49	6.15	4.62	5.14	5.37
Nordics Average	5.89	5.63	5.61	5.40	5.83	4.99	5.26	5.06	5.06	5.50	6.23	4.64	5.00	5.39
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

PORTUGAL	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.66	5.56	5.44	5.38	5.75	4.98	5.29	5.16	5.01	5.25	5.97	5.21	5.48	5.39
Market Average	5.47	5.29	5.31	5.14	5.61	4.79	5.17	4.95	4.82	5.17	5.87	4.83	4.95	5.18
Southern Europe Average	5.70	5.59	5.53	5.28	5.81	5.31	5.38	5.22	4.99	5.41	6.08	4.85	5.16	5.41
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

SINGAPORE	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
DBS	6.41	6.78	6.38	6.19	6.22	6.16	6.19	6.54	6.16	6.66	6.28	4.64	5.75	6.18
Deutsche Bank	5.83	6.33	6.33	5.85	6.48	6.08	6.21	5.98	6.16	6.15	6.54	6.08	6.06	6.16
Standard Chartered Bank	6.42	6.32	6.23	5.88	6.31	6.12	5.93	5.91	6.00	5.99	6.44	5.70	5.84	6.08
UBS	5.90	5.63	5.57	5.57	5.88	5.24	5.26	5.77	5.18	5.50	6.60	3.45	5.56	5.47
Market Average	5.88	5.88	5.75	5.58	5.98	5.57	5.60	5.64	5.46	5.66	6.30	4.61	5.61	5.66
Asia Average	6.07	5.91	5.81	5.72	6.08	5.71	5.73	5.71	5.51	5.80	6.36	5.49	5.69	5.81
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

SPAIN	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.84	6.09	5.53	5.17	5.76	5.44	5.39	5.27	5.19	5.49	5.84	4.97	5.33	5.49
Market Average	5.77	5.68	5.59	5.37	5.84	5.51	5.46	5.36	5.04	5.52	6.14	4.80	5.08	5.47
Southern Europe Average	5.70	5.59	5.53	5.28	5.81	5.31	5.38	5.22	4.99	5.41	6.08	4.85	5.16	5.41
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

SWEDEN	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
SEB	6.50	6.18	5.95	6.18	6.25	5.88	6.16	5.62	5.41	5.79	6.68	5.20	6.13	5.99
Market Average	5.78	5.57	5.53	5.38	5.72	5.14	5.47	5.05	5.02	5.33	6.16	4.62	5.18	5.38
Nordics Average	5.89	5.63	5.61	5.40	5.83	4.99	5.26	5.06	5.06	5.50	6.23	4.64	5.00	5.39
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

SWITZERLAND	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.74	5.87	5.52	5.06	6.03	5.53	4.94	5.17	4.86	4.87	6.18	4.92	5.09	5.37
SIX	6.39	6.15	6.07	5.90	6.47	5.82	5.71	5.93	5.75	6.00	6.56	5.36	5.55	5.97
UBS	5.87	5.78	5.72	5.64	5.67	5.49	5.48	5.65	5.34	5.52	6.56	5.13	5.16	5.62
Market Average	5.99	5.90	5.77	5.55	6.02	5.59	5.48	5.63	5.36	5.60	6.47	5.22	5.30	5.68
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

NETHERLANDS	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.66	5.76	5.34	5.53	5.68	5.72	5.42	5.38	4.85	5.54	6.06	5.58	5.38	5.53
Intesa Sanpaolo	6.24	5.76	5.94	5.68	5.94	5.67	5.50	5.20	5.38	5.76	6.24	6.00	5.88	5.78
Market Average	5.54	5.37	5.34	5.33	5.55	5.15	5.30	5.13	4.88	5.43	6.01	5.28	5.12	5.34
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

UK	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNP Paribas	5.69	5.97	5.49	5.31	5.69	5.77	5.34	5.34	4.52	5.36	5.89	4.44	5.62	5.42
UBS	6.00	5.74	5.66	5.72	5.79	5.28	5.39	5.70	5.14	5.48	5.61	5.04	5.09	5.51
Market Average	5.45	5.49	5.22	5.21	5.29	5.18	5.04	5.26	4.77	5.19	5.41	4.38	5.04	5.15
Western Europe Average	5.69	5.65	5.53	5.34	5.74	5.39	5.30	5.34	5.07	5.42	6.14	4.99	5.15	5.44
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55

USA	Account Management	Asset Safety and Risk Management	Asset Servicing	Cash Management and FX	Client Service	Data Services	Service Innovation	Liquidity Management	Pricing	Regulation and Compliance	Relationship Management	Securities Lending	Technology	AVERAGE
BNY	5.43	5.27	5.57	5.09	5.57	5.43	5.43	4.83	5.83	5.43	6.03	5.33	5.43	5.44
MUFG	5.56	5.56	5.70	5.48	5.23	5.15	4.85	4.88	5.31	4.72	5.21	4.50	4.77	5.15
UBS	5.56	5.42	5.46	5.12	5.71	5.10	5.43	5.12	5.40	5.37	6.29	5.00	5.18	5.40
Market Average	5.40	5.54	5.36	5.17	5.43	5.03	5.27	5.03	5.41	5.36	5.76	5.02	5.20	5.31
North America Average	5.60	5.58	5.46	5.28	5.56	5.08	5.21	5.14	5.33	5.48	5.94	5.09	5.14	5.38
Global Average	5.83	5.73	5.59	5.46	5.84	5.44	5.43	5.41	5.20	5.57	6.15	5.17	5.33	5.55