Sustainable Research Enhanced Japan Equity UCITS ETF - ACC Shares

31.12.2023 Quarterly Performance Review

Marketing Communication

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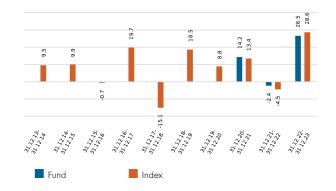
Performance over quarter in JPY (%)

Fund 2.2 Market index

MSCI Japan Index (Net) Market index is for comparative purposes only.

Source of fund performance is Fidelity. Other share classes may be available. Please refer to the prospectus for more details.

Performance for 12 month periods in JPY (%)



Market Environment

The Japanese equity market gained in the fourth quarter of 2023. Positive market movements were largely driven by a pullback in US interest rates amid expectations that the US Federal Reserve had reached the peak of its hiking cycle. Against this backdrop, 10-year Japanese government bond yields fell to 0.62% by the end of the year and the yen strengthened to ¥141 against the US dollar. Robust earnings results also supported Japanese stocks. As long-term rates fell, growth and cyclical sectors in Japan generated the strongest returns, led by precision instruments, electric appliances and services. Conversely, value stocks were relative laggards following an extended period of outperformance. Profits came in well ahead of consensus forecasts and more than 50% of companies reported positive earnings surprises. Notable contributions came from the automobiles/parts and utilities sectors.

Fund Performance

The fund's Acc-JPY share class delivered positive returns of 1.44% (net) in the fourth guarter underperforming the MSCI Japan Index (N), which returned 2.21%. The fund underperformed, primarily due to stock selection in information technology, health care and communication services. Conversely, stock picking in materials and consumer discretionary added to relative

Health care weakened performance

Overweight positioning in Japanese pharmaceutical company Astellas Pharma detracted from relative performance as it revised its full year earnings guidance downwards, although this was not a surprise given (non-cash) amortisation costs related to the acquisition of US-based drugmaker Iveric Bio earlier in the year.

Information Technology detracted from performance

Not holding a position in Lasertec, a fab-lite company that develops, manufactures, and sells semiconductor-related systems, proved unrewarding as its shares rose despite decline in orders in the first quarter largely on positive management commentary on expected recovery in second half. Eventually, we need ASML's EUV order recovery for Lasertec's order, and current ASML earnings suggests EUV orders still struggling so this is something we need to continue to monitor.

Position in Japanese PVC silicon wafer manufacturer Shin-Etsu added to relative performance. Its shares were supported by rising investors' expectations for a boost to North American housing demand from in light of declining long-term interest rates and residential mortgage rates in the US, along with a recovery in semiconductors demand.

Fund Positioning

This enhanced index fund is managed by the Fidelity Systematic Investing team and is constructed using a rigorous and repeatable investment process. It is designed to provide sustainable broad Japan equity exposure with low active risk and a tracking error of below 2%. This fund leverages Fidelity's unique fundamental research and proprietary sustainable ratings. It is expected to behave similarly to the index, with broadly neutral sector and regional positions, with security selection being the predominant driver of risk. The portfolio is designed to outperform its benchmark, with an alpha target of +1% gross per annum through the market cycle, i.e., more than five years.

Core Active Positions

At a sector level, consumer discretionary, industrials and information technology are the key overweights. Conversely, the key underweights are real estate, communication services and health care. At a stock level, the fund has key overweight positions in Japan's largest chemical company Shin-Etsu, Amano, a company that specializes in time information, parking, environmental, and cleaning systems and Japanese human resources company Recruit Holdings. On the other hand, key underweight positions include multinational video game company Nintendo, multinational investment holding company Softbank and multinational pharmaceutical company Takeda Pharmaceuticals.

Key trades

We initiated a new position in Subaru, the automobile manufacturing division of Japanese transportation conglomerate Subaru Corporation. Conversely, we closed position in East Japan Railway Company, a passenger railway company

Past performance does not predict future returns. The fund's returns may increase or decrease as a result of currency fluctuations. The investment which is promoted concerns the acquisition of units or shares in a fund, and not in a given underlying asset owned by the fund.

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