



PRESS RELEASE

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

“INTERNATIONALIZING THE GREEK CAPITAL MARKETS”

&

“INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ATHENS STOCK EXCHANGE”

In the context of the

26th Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum "Greece - Speeding Ahead Post Investment Upgrade"

Monday, December 9, 2024 – New York

24 Sessions – 97 Top Speakers – 19 Listed Companies

An International Summit about the Greek Economy & Investment Opportunities in NEW YORK

Featuring Top US and International Investors, Global & Greek Companies,

Global Investment Banks & Institutions, High-Ranking Government Officials from Greece and the US

[PHOTO GALLERY 1](#) | [PHOTO GALLERY 2](#)

Digital Journal <https://forums.capitallink.com/greece/2024/flip/>

Agenda : <https://forums.capitallink.com/greece/2024/agenda.html>

New York, 12 December, 2024

The following highly interesting Panel Discussions, entitled “**INTERNATIONALIZING THE GREEK CAPITAL MARKETS**” and “**INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ATHENS STOCK EXCHANGE**”, were part of the agenda of the **26th Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum: "Greece - Speeding Ahead Post Investment Upgrade"**, that was held with great success and participation, on **Monday, December 11, 2024** in New York, in cooperation with the New York Stock Exchange, the Athens Exchange Group (ATHEX Group), and major Global Investment Banks & Organizations, and under the Auspices of the Consulate General of Greece in New York. «**Goldman Sachs**», «**Morgan Stanley**» and «**TEN Ltd (Tsakos Energy Navigation)**» were the **Lead Sponsors**.

1. Panel Discussion “INTERNATIONALIZING THE GREEK CAPITAL MARKETS”

Moderator: Mr. Apostolos Gkoutzinis, Partner – Milbank

Panelists:

- **Mr. Yianos Kontopoulos, CEO – Athens Exchange Group**
- **Mr. Dimitris Kofitsas, Head of Greece Investment Banking Coverage & Financing – Goldman Sachs International**
- **Mr. Konstantinos Kostopoulos, Head of Greece & Cyprus Investment Banking – Morgan Stanley**

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Mr. Apostolos Gkoutzinis, Partner – Milbank, stated: “We are pleased to have had the opportunity to discuss the position of Greece companies vis a vis investors in the international capital markets. Following the achievement of investment grade status for the country, and in an environment of declining interest rates and falling inflation, we discussed a number of opportunities for Greek companies to take advantage of a strong market environment. While there are lots of challenges ahead, the general sentiment is one of cautious optimism. The international financial markets are ready to support investments in Greece or investments by Greek companies internationally.”

Mr. Yianos Kontopoulos, CEO – Athens Exchange Group, stated: “As we approach the end of a year full of challenges, but also remarkable milestones for the Athens Stock Exchange, it is clear that 2024 has been a transformative year.

The inclusion of the Greek Stock Exchange on FTSE’s watchlist for potential reclassification to developed markets is undoubtedly a significant development for us, validating the concerted efforts made over the past two years. This progression follows eight years in the emerging markets category, underscoring the advances in key metrics of our market as well as those of Greek listed companies.

Throughout 2024, our listed companies showed strong momentum, with a total capital raised of €1.3 billion, a figure expected to reach €2.5 billion with upcoming actions. Including major placements made by key shareholders of listed companies, this total reaches nearly €5 billion. These figures highlight the robust dynamics of our companies, which we strive to showcase within the broader ecosystem.

Our efforts toward extroversion and enhancing the competitiveness of our market will continue with new initiatives and actions. Recognizing our institutional role as a core pillar of Greece’s economic development, we remain committed to supporting every healthy growth step made by Greek businesses, tackling challenges and leveraging opportunities that will guide the Athens Stock Exchange into a new era.”

Mr. Dimitris Kofitsas, Head of Greece Investment Banking Coverage & Financing – Goldman Sachs International stated: “2024 was pivotal year for the Greek capital markets across all asset classes from equity to investment grade and high yield debt. The increased activity was a result of both renewed appetite of international investors to deploy capital in Greece and the improving macro environment with inflation and interest rates at downward path

In equity markets, there was total EUR 3.3bn of new equity issuance which was the 3rd highest volume after 2021 and 2015. There were landmark transactions executed such the IPO of Athens Airport, the full privatisation of Piraeus Bank, the Government’s 10% secondary placement in National Bank of Greece and the primary offering of Cenergy to fund their expansion in the US market. For 2025 I expect ECM activity to slow down and focus more on capital return and accelerated bookbuildings than in big scale IPOs or follow on offerings.

In debt markets, it was a record year for the Greek Banks with total €7.7bn of new issuance vs €4.2bn in 2023 to cover MREL needs and capital instruments refinancing. The key milestone for the Banks is that they managed to be upgraded to investment grade which has made a major difference in orderbooks and the investor base. To give you an example NBG’s last senior bond issuance in October priced at 130bps credit spread while their first senior bond in 2020 was at 330bps spread.

The Greek Debt office also accessed the market with a new EUR 3bn 30yr bond which is a testament of the strong and solid appetite of investors to invest in Greece.

On the corporate side we also saw increased activity given European credit spreads are touching all time lows with number of Greek corporates (PPC, Helleniq Energy, Metlen) pricing new Eurobond offerings after very limited activity in 2022 and 2023.

The outlook for Greek equity and debt capital markets remains constructive despite the high number of deals in 2024 supported by Greece’s stable politics, the Greek growth premium compared to other European countries and the recent successful placements which made investors happy. The key for 2025 is supply-driven ie to find new exciting

stories to IPO or implement follow on offerings given demand for Greek equities and debt products will remain healthy.”

Mr. Konstantinos Kostopoulos, Head of Greece & Cyprus Investment Banking – **Morgan Stanley**, participated in the panel discussion exploring the growth and evolution of the Greek capital markets.

2. Panel Discussion “INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ATHENS STOCK EXCHANGE”

Moderator: Ms. Sophia Grigoriadou, Leader of Legal Services – **PwC | Vizas - Grigoriadou & Partners Law Firm**

Panelists:

- **Mr. Anastasios Astyfidis**, Founder & CEO – **Ambrosia Capital**
- **Mr. Stefano Conte**, Managing Director, Head of Southern Europe ECM – **Barclays**
- **Mr. Cesar Ramirez**, Executive Director, Head of Market Classification, Index Management Research – **MSCI**
- **Mr. Ilias Kantzos**, CEO – **NBG Securities**

Ms. Sophia Grigoriadou, Leader of Legal Services – **PwC | Vizas - Grigoriadou & Partners Law Firm** stated: “It is again, this time of the year, that Capital Link in NYC brings together government officials, Greek companies and international investors to discuss the Greek economy and investments in Greece. After the 2023 extraordinary growth of ASE, significant transactions continued taking place in 2024, including the largest buyout in the history of ASE of €3.2bn. Our Panel discussed the investment opportunities in the ASE from the point of view of the Greek companies and the international investors. The target for 2025 and onwards is more listed companies to monetize on the good results and stability of the Greek economy, to extend their free float and attract new foreign investors. The new ASE requirements for free float aim exactly to boost the trading activity of the Greek equity market and to upgrade the investment profile of Greek listed companies. From the point of view of market classification, the Greek equity market has made significant progress in size, liquidity and the regulatory framework. As to the potential challenges from the regional and international environment, Greek companies have demonstrated extraordinary stamina over the years. To my opinion, the very good growth and market sentiment built during the recent years justify the optimism that the target should be achieved in the near future.”

Mr. Anastasios Astyfidis, Founder & CEO – **Ambrosia Capital** stated: “The Greek economy has demonstrated resilience and continued growth for yet another year, despite challenges across the European landscape. GDP is projected to expand at a solid 2.0-2.5% over the medium term, surpassing the average growth rate of the Eurozone. This growth is primarily driven by robust capital formation and, to a lesser extent, private consumption. At the same time the Greek Government remains committed on disciplined fiscal policies aimed at containing post-pandemic spending.

The Ministry of Finance has exceeded ambitious primary surplus targets, leveraging economic momentum to reduce public debt from 200.6% of GDP in 2021 to 162.6% by Q2 2024. The labour market, previously a vulnerability, has shown marked improvement, with unemployment declining by 3% over the past two years to below 10%.

Tourism in Greece is on track for a record-breaking 2024, with travel receipts reaching an impressive EUR 5.9 billion in the second quarter alone—an annual increase of 10%. The outlook is promising, as extended holiday seasons, emerging destinations, and upscale investments in hotels and resorts position the sector for sustained growth.

This progress has not gone unnoticed by rating agencies. Scope Ratings initiated Greece's investment-grade resurgence in August 2023, followed by endorsements from Standard & Poor's, Morningstar DBRS, and Fitch. While Moody's has yet to join, it has recently upgraded Greece by two notches, positioning the country just one step away from an investment-grade rating. Greek banks have also benefited from this upward trajectory, with some surpassing the sovereign rating. For instance, Moody's now rates Eurobank and the National Bank of Greece at Baa2, compared to the government's Ba1.

The Athens Stock Exchange (ASE) has mirrored these positive developments, with the main market index surging 63% since 2022, outperforming the Stoxx 600's 6.5% gain. However, 2024 has seen a more modest performance leaving the market at more compelling multiples than it was a year ago. The main reason is the significant stock supply from primary and secondary placements including the first IPO in years. To date in 2024, the investor universe focusing upon Greece has been asked to accommodate an additional c. EUR 4.3 billion through primary and secondary offerings in the equity market.

Looking forward, the potential reclassification of the ASE to developed market status could be transformative. This migration, however, must be managed strategically, as a new investor base will need to familiarize itself with Greek equities, and index fund flows may exert significant influence. FTSE Russell has placed Greece on its Watchlist for a potential upgrade, with a decision anticipated in March 2025. MSCI, the largest index provider, has yet to make a similar announcement.

Despite an unpredictable global geopolitical climate, including major political transitions in the U.S., Germany, and France, the outlook for the Greek market remains optimistic. Greek banks are accelerating capital replenishment while offering attractive shareholder returns. At the same time, corporations are advancing ambitious, transformative business plans while maintaining strong profitability, underscoring the resilience and potential of the Greek economy."

Mr. Stefano Conte, Managing Director, Head of Southern Europe ECM – **Barclays stated:** "In the context of a stronger US vs Europe outperformance of equity indices in 2024, the Greek market has once again delivered solid gains this year, outperforming Europe as a whole, and over the last two years delivered a performance aligned to the US. 2024 appears to have been a year of more stabilisation, after the outstanding growth seen last year which was driven by a number of catalysts.

We saw a clear increase of equity issuance in Greece, including the first large IPO in many years, a continuation of the successful divestments in the banking sector and a handful of other offerings. These transactions show that the market capacity for equity offerings in Greece has started to grow and to broaden. Continuing the trend started in 2023, what stands out in 2024 is a return of a skew to secondary, rather than capital increases, equity offerings which represented close to 100% of total equity issuance and saw secondary transactions volumes at the highest since 2007; this is a sign of health in the market, and of more stabilised conditions.

After an incredibly dense year of macro events globally in 2024, markets now have more visibility into 2025 which will be an equally important year, with many new governments globally implementing new policies in parallel with the ongoing rates normalisation by central banks, in a backdrop of slower economic growth. European equities remain overall attractive in terms of valuations compared to the US and to historical levels; Greece has further increased visibility with global investors in 2024 and shall continue to be perceived as a source of potential new opportunities."

Mr. Cesar Ramirez, Executive Director, Head of Market Classification, Index Management Research – **MSCI stated:** "Over the past decade, the Greek equity market has made progress in size, liquidity, and accessibility, demonstrating its potential to align more closely with global standards.

During a panel discussion on market classification Mr. Ramirez highlighted MSCI's commitment to accurately reflect the evolution of the Greek market through its frameworks and indices. He noted that the market's free float adjusted market capitalization of the equity universe has grown by 35% in the last ten years.

Mr. Ramirez also emphasized steps to address market accessibility, including improvements in stock lending, short selling, and transferability, that have been a catalyst for reform. Regulatory advancements, such as those under the Central Securities Depositories Regulation (CSDR), have improved Greece's clearing and settlement infrastructure, ensuring it aligns more closely with international standards. While some reforms are still under implementation, Mr. Ramirez recognized the proactive role of Greek market authorities in addressing accessibility challenges and fostering growth.

Looking ahead, he noted opportunities for further enhancement in size, liquidity, and the full adoption of recent reforms. However, he commended the Greek equity market for its substantial strides and its promising trajectory toward global competitiveness. Finally, Mr. Ramirez reiterated that MSCI remains dedicated to engaging with stakeholders, conducting comprehensive consultations, and ensuring transparency in decisions affecting market classifications.”

Mr. Ilias Kantzos, CEO – NBG Securities, stated: “At NBG Securities, we believe that there are still enough catalysts in place which could lead to a further re-rating of Greek equities next year. The supportive macro backdrop, together with continued fiscal outperformance, leaves room for further upgrades in the sovereign rating in 2025-2026. Additionally, low political risk—a key prerequisite for investor interest and participation—along with the attainment of Investment Grade (IG) status, has brought tangible benefits to the real economy and Greek capital markets. The return of investor confidence, evidenced by strong appetite for Greek assets in recent flagship transactions, enhanced stock market liquidity due to incremental post-IG investor flows, attractive valuation metrics both in absolute and relative terms which could provide downside support, resilient corporate earnings (particularly among non-financials), and high dividend yields, which in many cases are well above those of European peers, further strengthen the investment case. Although one could argue that these catalysts are already partially priced-in at current levels, we believe that they continue to preserve the positive narrative for Greek equities, ensuring that they remain in the investor spotlight for yet another year.”

THE FORUM WAS ORGANIZED:

In Cooperation With: New York Stock Exchange – NYSE & Athens Exchange Group (ATHEX Group)

Under The Auspices: of the Consulate General of Greece in New York, which hosted a welcome reception for all speakers.

This International Summit about Greece held in New York, has been taking place year after year, regardless of the political and economic conditions in Greece. With a 26-year track record of success, it has been engaged in a systematic effort to highlight Greece’s profile to a global business and investment audience. The Forum was organized in a particularly positive timing for Greece, Featuring Top US and International Investors, Global & Greek Companies, Global Investment Banks & Institutions, High-Ranking Government Officials from Greece and the US (4 Greek Ministers), 19 Listed Companies, and 97 Top Level Speakers. This year's forum was particularly significant as Greece is now experiencing a remarkable upturn in economic growth and inflow of foreign investments. The regaining of the Investment Grade Rating is a milestone for the Greek economy, attracting long-term capital and creating favorable liquidity conditions. This rating status unlocks opportunities for a significant influx of foreign capital, facilitated by the significant efforts in digitalization and tax incentives. The country offers diverse sectors ripe for investment, including infrastructure, hospitality, real estate, and energy. Greece's geographical position at the crossroads of three continents provides easy access to emerging and mature markets.

The Prime Minister of Greece, H.E. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, opened the Forum and delivered the Greek Government’s message to the international investors. Prime Minister Mitsotakis’ written message was read by Mr. Nicolas Bornozis, President of Capital Link.

Keynote Remarks by Greek Ministers: Minister of Infrastructure & Transport, H.E. Christos Staikouras – former Minister of Finance, Minister of Labour & Social Security, H.E. Niki Kerameus, Alternate Minister of Economy & Finance, H.E. Nikolaos Papathanasis, Deputy Minister of Environment & Energy, and H.E. Alexandra Sdoukou.

Greek Government Officials: Ms. Mary Psylla, General Secretary of Tax Policy - Ministry of Economy & Finance, Mr. Orestis Kavalakis, Governor of Recovery and Resilience Facility Coordination Agency - Ministry of Economy and Finance, Mr. Dimitrios Tsakonias, Director General - Public Debt Management Agency, Mr. George Pitsilis, Governor – Independent Authority for Public Revenue, and Mr. Vassilis Kontozamanis, Former Alternate Minister of Health.

US Government Representative • H.E. George J. Tsunis, U.S. Ambassador to the Hellenic Republic - U.S. Embassy in Athens.

European Investment Bank will be represented by **Mr. Yannis Tsakiris, Vice President.**

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The Athens Exchange Group will be represented by **Mr. Yianos Kontopoulos**, CEO - Athens Exchange Group, (via webcast), and **Enterprise Greece** by **Dr. Marinos Giannopoulos**, CEO.

The Forum featured the important participation of representatives from ❖ **the biggest Greek Banks:**

- 1) **Four Systemic Banks, Alpha Bank - Eurobank - National Bank - Piraeus Bank,**
- 2) **Attica Bank and Hellenic Development Bank of Investments (HDBI ex TANEQ),** and
- 3) from ❖ **major Global Investment Banks • Barclays • BNP Paribas • Goldman Sachs International • Morgan Stanley • Nomura • AXIA Ventures Group.**
- 4) **Participating speakers in investor panel, representatives from: AXIA Ventures Group - Brook Lane Capital - CVC Capital Partners • Grifon Capital Advisors • Oaktree**

❖ **19 Listed Companies :** • AKTOR Group of Companies (ATH:INKAT) • Alpha Services & Holdings S.A. (ATH:ALPHA) • Athens Stock Exchange S.A. (ATH:EXAE) • Athens International Airport S.A. (ATH:AIA) • Athens Water Supply & Sewage Company S.A. (ATH:EYDAP) • Attica Bank S.A. (ATH:TATT) • AVAX Group (ATH:AVAX) • Dimand S.A. (ATH: DIMAND) • Ellaktor S.A. (ATH:ELLAKTOR) • Eurobank Ergasias Services & Holdings S.A. (ATH: EUROB) • GEK TERNA S.A. (ATH:GEKTERNA) • HELLENIQ ENERGY Holdings S.A. (ATH: ELPE) • IDEAL Holdings S.A. (ATH:INTEK) • LAMDA Development S.A. (ATH:LAMDA) • Metlen Energy & Metals S.A. (ATH:MYTIL) • National Bank of Greece S.A. (ATH: ETE) • Piraeus Financial Holdings S.A. (ATH:TPEIR) • Public Power Corporation S.A. – PPC (ATH:PPC) • Trastor REIC (ATH:TRASTOR).

During the Official Luncheon the Greek Minister of Infrastructure & Transport, Mr. Christos Staikouras, Mr. Christos Megalou, Chief Executive Officer, Piraeus Group, and Ms. Eleni Vrettou, CEO - Attica Bank delivered Keynote Remarks. Mr. Chris Taylor, Global Head of Listings – NYSE, Mr. Yianos Kontopoulos, CEO - Athens Exchange Group, and Dr. Nikolas P. Tsakos, Founder, Chairman & CEO - TEN Ltd. (NYSE: TEN); Chairman, INTERTANKO 2014-2018, delivered Welcome Remarks.

The Forum concluded with an Official Dinner during which the "**2024 Capital Link Hellenic Leadership Award**" was presented to **Dr. Yannis Stournaras**, Governor of Bank of Greece, for his invaluable contributions to the European and Greek economies, and for his instrumental role in keeping Greece as part of the Euro and to Greece's return to economic growth and prosperity.

Dr. Yannis Stournaras delivered Keynote Remarks.

The Dinner opened with a brief Welcoming Speech by **The Ambassador of Greece to the USA, H.E. Ekaterini Nassika.**

Dr. Yannis Stournaras was introduced by **Mr. John Paulson**, President & Portfolio Manager - **Paulson & Co.**

«**GREEK AMERICAN ISSUER DAY**» at **NYSE-New York Stock Exchange.**

On **Tuesday, December, 10, 2024**, within the context of the "**26th Annual Capital Link Invest in Greece Forum**", the **New York Stock Exchange** in cooperation with **Capital Link** organized for a **20th year in a row**, a special ceremony, the "**Greek American Issuer Day at NYSE**", honoring Greece and Celebrating the Close Ties between the US, the Greek American and the Greek Business Communities, during which Greek & Greek American companies listed on the New York Stock Exchange rang the "Closing Bell" - at NYSE-New York Stock Exchange.

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Greek Securities Firms:

- NBG Securities

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Cocktail Reception Sponsor: Navios Maritime Partners L.P.

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ABOUT CAPITAL LINK

Founded in 1995, Capital Link is a New York based investor relations, financial communications, and advisory firm with a strategic focus on the maritime, commodities and energy sectors, MLPs, as well as Closed-End Funds and ETFs. Based in New York City, Capital Link has presence in London, Athens & Oslo. The company is a member of the Baltic Exchange and works very closely with the New York Stock Exchange, NASDAQ and the London Stock Exchange as well as with major international and supranational organizations and industry associations in the areas of the firm's strategic concentration.

Capital Link offers a full suite of services including strategic and corporate advisory, investor relations, media relations, public and industry relations and the organization of corporate events. Capital Link's proactive approach integrates Investor Relations, Information Technology and Media, enhancing awareness and branding for our clients through tailored outreach programs targeting analysts, institutional and individual investors and the financial media complemented by extensive and uniquely powerful marketing platforms.

Capital Link is also known for the organization of 18 top-level investment and industry forums, Webinars and Podcasts, the majority of which focus on maritime transportation and U.S. investment products, in 10 countries in Europe, the United States and Asia, in key industry centers, such as New York, London, Oslo, Hamburg, Athens, Limassol, Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo and Hong Kong, featuring industry leaders focusing on investment strategies, sectors, critical topics of interest to the investment community that draw the elite of the global financial, investment and business communities. Capital Link holds about 18 forums annually focusing on the areas of its strategic concentration.

The Capital Link brand is widely recognized and valued worldwide by participants in these communities for combining rich informational and educational content with as well as superior networking opportunities with a global marketing platform that enhances the visibility and reach of these events on a global scale that lasts well beyond the date on which each event is held, becoming a continuous reference point for market participants.

Capital Link's efforts have been recognized in 2023 by HABA – Hellenic American Association for Professionals in Finance, in 2018 by the Finance Monthly CEO Awards, in 2016 by the Wealth & Finance Magazine - by the International Propeller Club of the United States and by AHI-American Hellenic Institute, in 2013 and 2012 by the InterContinental Finance Magazine, and also in 2011 by the Lloyds's List Greek Shipping Awards.