

Equity Focus

1Q26 Shopping List: Geopolitics and Beyond

by Intermonte Research Team

Italian Equity Market

- **Market performance and macroeconomic backdrop in 1Q26.** Financial markets reacted to heightened geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, but overall equity indices proved resilient during phases of extreme uncertainty. The Italian FTSEMIB is among the few major indices in positive territory since the start of the Iran conflict on 27 February, and is second only to the Nasdaq. Energy stocks were the clear outperformers in 1Q26, while we observed some profit-taking in financials and cyclical names. Importantly, market moves remained orderly, with no signs of panic selling. This behaviour suggests investors remain confident that geopolitical conflicts will ultimately converge towards negotiated solutions, leading to limited and manageable economic disruption - similar to the experience during the tariff-related uncertainty in April 2025.
- **Earnings direction and market multiples.** Diverging forces are currently shaping earnings expectations across sectors. Energy earnings estimates have been revised upwards following the sharp increase in oil price assumptions. Conversely, **industrials and consumer-related sectors** face downside risks should the current macro environment translate into weaker consumption trends. Having said that, we believe many companies retain sufficient flexibility on cost management to partially offset headwinds. Earnings momentum remains clearly tilted in favour of businesses with **strong pricing power**. Financials are, by their nature, exposed to market volatility; the current backdrop remains broadly supportive for near-term earnings, however. Higher interest rates and limited deterioration in asset quality continue to act as tailwinds for banks, while **asset gatherers and insurers** benefit from solid net inflows and supportive investment trends. Utilities sit in a more balanced position, facing both positive and negative factors in the current environment.
- **Our expectations for 1Q26 results and selected list.** We expect directional market trends to continue to be dictated by geopolitics and macro concerns. We are nevertheless positive on financial stocks in the current environment and the recent correction has been an opportunity to gain exposure rather than a sign of a trend inversion. Strong capital bases, dividend capacity and solid earnings expectations underpin the sector, while the increase in spreads and risk premiums are unlikely to dent sentiment.

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

The reproduction of the information, recommendations and research produced by Intermonte SIM contained herein and of any its parts is strictly prohibited. None of the contents of this document may be shared with third parties without authorisation from Intermonte.

This report is directed exclusively at market professional and other institutional investors (institutions) and is not for distribution to person other than "Institution" ("Non-Institution"), who should not rely on this material. Moreover, any investment or service to which this report may relate will not be made available to Non-Institution.

The information and data in this report have been obtained from sources which we believe to be reliable, although the accuracy of these cannot be guaranteed by Intermonte. In the event that there be any doubt as to their reliability, this will be clearly indicated. The main purpose of the report is to offer up-to-date and accurate information in accordance with regulations in force covering "recommendations" and is not intended nor should it be construed as a solicitation to buy or sell securities.

This disclaimer is constantly updated on Intermonte's website www.intermonte.it under LEGAL NOTICES. Valuations and recommendations can be found in the text of the most recent research and/or reports on the companies in question. For a list of all recommendations made by Intermonte on any financial instrument or issuer in the last twelve months consult the web page CUSTOMER AREA.

Intermonte distributes research and engages in other approved activities with respect to Major U.S. Institutional Investors ("Majors") and other Qualified Institutional Buyers ("QIBs"), in the United States, via Plural Securities LLC under SEC 15a-6 guidelines. Intermonte is not registered as a broker dealer in the United States under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), and is not a member of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation ("SIPC"). Plural Securities LLC is registered as a broker-dealer under the Exchange Act and is a member of SIPC.

ANALYST CERTIFICATION

For each company mentioned in this report the respective research analyst hereby certifies that all of the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect the analyst's personal views about any or all of the subject issuer (s) or securities. The analyst (s) also certifies that no part of their compensation was, is or will be directly or indirectly related to the specific recommendation or view in this report.

The analyst (s) responsible for preparing this research report receive(s) compensation that is based upon various factors, including Intermonte's total profits, a portion of which is generated by Intermonte's corporate finance activities, although this is minimal in comparison to that generated by brokerage activities. Intermonte's internal procedures and codes of conduct are aimed to ensure the impartiality of its financial analysts. The exchange of information between the Corporate Finance sector and the Research Department is prohibited, as is the exchange of information between the latter and the proprietary equity desk in order to prevent conflicts of interest when recommendations are made.

The analyst responsible for the report is not a) a resident of US; b) an associated person of a U.S. broker-dealer; c) supervised by a supervisory principal of a U.S. broker-dealer. This Research Report is distributed in the U.S. through Plural Securities LLC, 950 3rd Avenue, Suite 1702, NY 10022, USA.

GUIDE TO FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH

The main methods used to evaluate financial instruments and set a target price for 12 months after the investment recommendation are as follows:

- Discounted cash flow (DCF) model or similar methods such as a dividend discount model (DDM)
- Comparison with market peers, using the most appropriate methods for the individual company analysed: among the main ratios used for industrial sectors are price/ earnings (P/E), EV/EBITDA, EV/EBIT, price /sales
- Return on capital and multiples of adjusted net book value are the main methods used for banking sector stocks, while for insurance sector stocks return on allocated capital and multiples on net book value and embedded portfolio value are used
- For the utilities sector comparisons are made between expected returns and the return on the regulatory asset base (RAB)

Some of the parameters used in evaluations, such as the risk-free rate and risk premium, are the same for all companies covered, and are updated to reflect market conditions. Currently a risk-free rate of 4.0% and a risk premium between 5.5% - 6.0% are being used.

Frequency of research: quarterly.

Reports on all companies listed on the FTSEMIB40 Index, most of those on the MIDEX Index and the main small caps (regular coverage) are published at least once per quarter to comment on results and important newsflow.

A draft copy of each report may be sent to the subject company for its information (without target price and/or recommendations), but unless expressly stated in the text of the report, no changes are made before it is published.

Explanation of our ratings system:

BUY: stock expected to outperform the market by over 25% over a 12 month period;

OUTPERFORM: stock expected to outperform the market by between 10% and 25% over a 12 month period;

NEUTRAL: stock performance expected at between +10% and -10% compared to the market over a 12 month period;

UNDERPERFORM: stock expected to underperform the market by between -10% and -25% over a 12 month period;

SELL: stock expected to underperform the market by over 25% over a 12 month period.

Prices: The prices reported in the research refer to the price at the close of the previous day of trading

CURRENT INVESTMENT RESEARCH RATING DISTRIBUTIONS

Intermonte SIM is authorised by CONSOB to provide investment services and is listed at n° 246 in the register of brokerage firms.

As at 20 April 2026 Intermonte's Research Department covered 134 companies. Intermonte's distribution of stock ratings is as follows:

BUY:	32.84%
OUTPERFORM:	36.57%
NEUTRAL:	30.59%
UNDERPERFORM:	00.00%
SELL:	00.00%

The distribution of stock ratings for companies which have received corporate finance services from Intermonte in the last 12 months (80 in total) is as follows:

BUY:	53.75%
OUTPERFORM:	28.75%
NEUTRAL:	16.25%
UNDERPERFORM:	01.25%
SELL:	00.00%

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In order to disclose its possible conflicts of interest Intermonte SIM states that:

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. operates or has operated in the last 12 months as the person in charge of carrying out the share buyback plan approved by the shareholders' meeting of AZIMUT, EL.EN., ELICA, FILA, INTERCOS, INTRED, PHARMANUTRA, SESA, STAR7, SYS-DAT, TMP GROUP, UNIDATA, VALSOIA, WEBUILD

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. provides or has provided corporate brokerage services to ABC COMPANY, AEROPORTO GUGLIELMO MARCONI DI BOLOGNA, ALLCORE, ALMAWAVE, ANTARES VISION, AVIO, CASTA DIVA GROUP, CUBE LABS, CY4GATE, DOMINION HOSTING HOLDING, ELICA, ESPRINET, EVISIO, EXECUS, FINE FOODS & PHARMACEUTICALS NTM, FRANCHI UMBERTO MARMU, GPI, GREEN OLEO, HIGH QUALITY FOOD, IGD, IKONISYS SA, INTRED, ISCC FINTECH, LEMON SISTEMI, LUVÉ, MAPS, MARE ENGINEERING GROUP, NEODECORTECH, NOTORIOUS PICTURES, PREATONI GROUP, REDELF, REDFISH LONGTERM CAPITAL, REVO INSURANCE, REWAY GROUP, SERI INDUSTRIAL, SPINDOX, STAR7, TECNO, ULISSE BIOMED, WIIT, XENIA HOTELLERIE SOLUTION, Zest Group SpA in the last 12 months

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. operates or has operated in the last 12 months as Financial Content Provider on the company ALLCORE, ALMAWAVE, B&C SPEAKERS, BANCA SISTEMA, BIFIRE, CASTA DIVA GROUP, COFLE, COM.TEL, CUBE LABS, CY4GATE, DIGITOUCH, DOMINION HOSTING HOLDING, ECOSUNTEK, ELES, ELICA, ENERGY, EVISIO, EXECUS, FIERA MILANO, FILA, FOPE, G.M. LEATHER, GREEN OLEO, HIGH QUALITY FOOD, IGD, IKONISYS SA, INTERCOS, INTRED, ISCC FINTECH, LEMON SISTEMI, MAPS, MARE ENGINEERING GROUP, MASI AGRICOLA, MATECA FINTEC, MISITANO & STRACUZZI SPA, NEODECORTECH, NOTORIOUS PICTURES, OLIDATA, PREATONI GROUP, RACING FORCE, REDELF, REDFISH LONGTERM CAPITAL, SG COMPANY, SIMONE, SPINDOX, TAMBURI, TECNO, TMP GROUP, TPS, ULISSE BIOMED, XENIA HOTELLERIE SOLUTION, Zest Group SpA

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. performs or has performed in the last 12 months the role of intermediary appointed in the public purchase and/or exchange offer transaction of ANTARES VISION, MARE ENGINEERING GROUP, TINEXTA

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. operates or has operated in the last 12 months as liquidity provider of BANCA SISTEMA, Zest Group SpA

Intermonte SIM has acted as counterparty to WIIT Fin S.r.l. in connection with call and put options having WIIT S.p.A. shares and dividends as reference underlying.

Intermonte SIM is acting as financial advisor to Banca CF+ in the context of the public tender offer promoted on Banca Sistema.

Intermonte SIM is acting as financial advisor to TIM in relation to the company's saving shares conversion.

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. performs or has performed in the last 12 months the role of financial advisor for BANCA GENERALI, BANCO BPM, MARE ENGINEERING GROUP, TELECOM ITALIA, TINEXTA

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. operates or has operated in the last 12 months as market maker on financial instruments with underlying shares issued by AZA, AMPLIFON, AZIMUT, BANCA GENERALI, BANCA IFIS, BANCA MEDIOLANUM, BANCO BPM, BCA MPS, BCA POP SONDRIO, BFF BANK, Bper Banca, BREMBO, BUZZI, CAMPARI, DANIELI & C, DIASORIN, ENEL, ENI, ERG, FERRARI, FINCOBANK, INDUSTRIE DE NORÁ, INTERPUMP GROUP, INTESA SANPAOLO, INWIT, IREN, ITALGAS, IVECO GROUP, LEONARDO, LOTTOMATICA GROUP, MEDIOBANCA, MFE B, MONCLER, MONDADORI EDIT., NEXI, OVS, PIRELLI & C, POSTE ITALIANE, PRYSMIAN, SAPEM, SESA, SNAM S.p.A., STELLANTIS, STMICROELECTRONICS, TECHNOGYM, TECHNOPROBE, TELECOM ITALIA, TELECOM ITALIA R, TENARIS, TERNA, UNICREDIT, UNIPOL, WEBUILD

Intermonte Sim S.p.A. has or had in the last 12 months a marketing contract on instruments issued by BARCLAYS, BNP PARIBAS, GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC, LEONTEQ, MAREX FINANCIAL, MEDIOBANCA, MORGAN STANLEY, NATIXIS, SOCIETE GENERALE, UNICREDIT, VONTOBELN

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. performs or has performed in the last 12 months the role of specialist on financial instruments issued by ABITARE IN, AQUAFIL, BANCA IFIS, BANCA SISTEMA, COFLE, COM.TEL, DIGITOUCH, ECOSUNTEK, EL.EN., EMAK, ENERGY, FNM, GEFRAN, GREEN OLEO, INTRED, MATECA FINTEC, MISITANO & STRACUZZI SPA, MONDADORI EDIT., OLIDATA, OMER, PHARMANUTRA, POWERSOFT, QF ALPHA IMM, REPLY, SESA, SG COMPANY, SOMEK, STAR7, SYS-DAT, TAMBURI, TESMEC, THE ITALIAN SEA GROUP, TINEXTA, TMP GROUP, TXT E-SOLUTIONS, UNIDATA with the obligation to disseminate studies

Intermonte SIM S.p.A. plays or has played in the last 12 months the role of sponsor for UNIDATA S.p.A.

© Copyright 2026 by Intermonte SIM - All rights reserved

It is a violation of national and international copyright laws to reproduce all or part of this publication by email, xerography, facsimile or any other means. The Copyright laws impose heavy liability for such infringement. The Reports of Intermonte SIM are provided to its clients only. If you are not a client of Intermonte SIM and receive emailed, faxed or copied versions of the reports from a source other than Intermonte SIM you are violating the Copyright Laws. This document is not for attribution in any publication, and you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail without the explicit written consent of Intermonte SIM.

INTERMONTE will take legal action against anybody transmitting/publishing its Research products without its express authorization.

INTERMONTE Sim strongly believes its research product on Italian equities is a value added product and deserves to be adequately paid.

Intermonte Sim sales representatives can be contacted to discuss terms and conditions to be supplied the INTERMONTE research product.

INTERMONTE SIM is MIFID compliant - for our Best Execution Policy please check our Website <https://www.intermonte.it/avvertenze-legali/mifid-ii.html>

Further information is available.