

# HOW TO INVEST IN EUROPEAN EQUITIES IN 2015

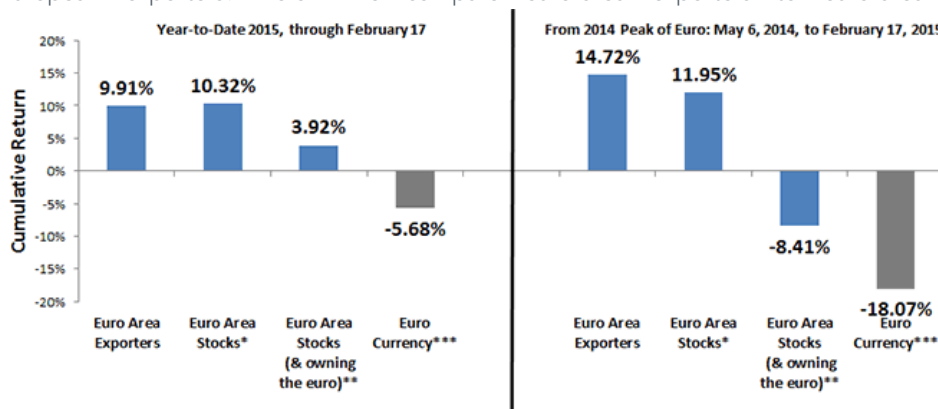
Jeremy Schwartz — Global Chief Investment Officer  
02/25/2015

Europe has been one of the most exciting equity markets in 2015. With the [S&P 500 Index](#) up 2.30% through February 17, 2015, [euro-area stocks in local currency](#)<sup>1</sup> are up 10.32%<sup>2</sup>. It's important to note that these same stocks in U.S. dollar terms are only up 3.92%<sup>3</sup>, due to the significant depreciation of the euro that we've witnessed. It's precisely this difference that has created a desire among investors to own euro-area equities<sup>4</sup> without layering on the additional [risk](#) of the euro. The [WisdomTree Europe Hedged Equity Fund \(HEDJ\)](#) has been a prime vehicle through which to express this theme, taking in more than [\\$4.3 billion in 2015 through February 13](#).<sup>5</sup>

**Euro Depreciation Can Give Euro-Area Exporters an Advantage** HEDJ tracks the performance of the [WisdomTree Europe Hedged Equity Index \(euro-area exporters\)](#), an Index that is primarily executing two systematic investment actions in its rules-based methodology:

- **Removing the Risk of the Euro:** Currency movements are difficult to predict, especially in the short term, but we believe that European Central Bank president Mario Draghi's blockbuster announcement of an open-ended [quantitative easing](#) program on January 22, 2015, makes it difficult to build a case for euro strength. Why own this source of risk?
- **Focusing on Exporters:** Every constituent of the WisdomTree Europe Hedged Equity Index must generate more than 50% of its revenues from outside Europe. As the euro depreciates, we believe these companies have the greatest potential to see their goods and services become less expensive to their international customers. We also believe that global multinationals offer good potential case studies of instances where profit growth can look quite different from economic growth, which we know for the euro area has been lackluster.

**How Effective Has Focusing on Euro-Area Exporters Been?** We know that the euro has been depreciating against the U.S. dollar, so for the moment let's put that part of the methodology aside and ask a simple question: Have we seen any benefit from focusing this Index on European exporters? Below we compare euro-area exporters to euro-area equities<sup>5</sup> to find out.



\*Euro Area Stocks: Refers to the returns of the MSCI EMU Local Currency Index universe.

\*\*Euro Area Stocks (& owning the euro): Refers to the returns of the MSCI EMU Index in U.S. dollars, which takes any movements of the U.S. dollar versus the euro into account.

\*\*\*Euro Currency: Refers to the performance of the euro currency versus the U.S. dollar.

Source: Bloomberg. Past performance is not indicative of future results. You cannot invest directly in an index.

For definitions of indexes in the chart, visit our [glossary](#). WisdomTree shares are bought and sold at market price (not NAV) and are not individually redeemed from the Fund. Total returns are calculated using the daily 4:00 p.m. EST net asset value (NAV). Market price returns reflect the midpoint of the bid/ask spread as of the close of trading on the exchange where Fund shares are listed.

Market price returns do not represent the returns you would receive if you traded shares at other times. You cannot invest directly in an index. Index performance does not represent actual fund or portfolio performance. A fund or portfolio may differ significantly from the securities included in the index. Index performance assumes reinvestment of dividends but does not reflect any management fees, transaction costs or other expenses that would be incurred by a portfolio or fund, or brokerage commissions on transactions in fund shares. Such fees, expenses and commissions could reduce returns.

**Average Annual Returns, as of December 31, 2014**

Total Returns (NAV)							Market Price			
Fund Ticker	Fund Exp. Ratio	WisdomTree Inception Date	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	Since HEDJ Inception Date	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	Since HEDJ Inception Date
WisdomTree Europe Hedged Equity Fund	HEDJ	0.58%	12/31/2009	6.55%	14.90%	7.25%	7.24%	4.78%	14.37%	7.12%
Spliced Market Cap-Weighted Benchmark <sup>1</sup>			4.32%	14.74%	6.82%	6.82%	4.32%	14.74%	6.82%	6.82%
WisdomTree Europe Hedged Equity Index		7/2/2012	7.11%	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.11%	N/A	N/A	N/A
MSCI EMU Local Currency Index			4.32%	15.36%	6.00%	5.99%	4.32%	15.36%	6.00%	5.99%

<sup>1</sup> Spliced Market Cap-Weighted Benchmark: MSCI EAFE Local Currency Index through 8/29/12, MSCI EMU Local Currency Index thereafter.

Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg.

Performance is historical and does not guarantee future results. Current performance may be lower or higher than quoted. Investment returns and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Performance data for the most recent month-end is available at [www.wisdomtree.com](http://www.wisdomtree.com).

WisdomTree shares are bought and sold at market price (not NAV) and are not individually redeemed from the Fund. Total returns are calculated using the daily 4:00 p.m. EST net asset value (NAV). Market price returns reflect the midpoint of the bid/ask spread as of the close of trading on the exchange where Fund shares are listed. Market price returns do not represent the returns you would receive if you traded shares at other times.

You cannot invest directly in an index. Index performance does not represent actual fund or portfolio performance. A fund or portfolio may differ significantly from the securities included in the index. Index performance assumes reinvestment of dividends but does not reflect any management fees, transaction costs or other expenses that would be incurred by a portfolio or fund, or brokerage commissions on transactions in fund shares. Such fees, expenses and commissions could reduce returns.

#### • From 2014 Euro Peak: We

believe that this has been one of the most critical tests of the methodology of euro-area exporters since its July 2, 2012, inception<sup>6</sup>. The euro depreciated more than 18% from May 6, 2014, to February 17, 2015. Euro-area exporters were up 14.72%—with a 2.77% cumulative outperformance of euro-area stocks. It's worth noting that owning euro-area stocks (and owning the euro) would have seen the positive returns of the equities wiped out, stressing the difference between layering and not layering on the euro currency risk<sup>7</sup>. **Companies Begin to Report Their 2014 Full-Year Results** During the first few weeks of February 2015, we saw the first companies within the top 20 holdings of the WisdomTree Europe Hedged Equity Index report their results. • **Daimler<sup>8</sup>** : Announced record levels of unit sales, revenue and earnings on February 5. The company's highest-ever [dividend](#) was also proposed. • **Sanofi<sup>9</sup>** : Announced currency impact turning positive with respect to net sales and business [earnings per share](#) during fourth quarter 2014. Proposed 21st consecutive annual dividend increase. • **LVMH<sup>10</sup>** : Announced currency impact turning positive with respect to evolution of revenues during fourth quarter 2014. We plan to detail some of these results further in future blogs, but it's worth emphasizing that even with the euro area's lackluster economic growth, signs are pointing to the potential for global multinationals to deliver strong results.

<sup>1</sup>Refers to the MSCI EMU Local Currency Index universe. <sup>2</sup>Source: Bloomberg, with performance measured from 12/31/14 to 2/17/15. <sup>3</sup>Refers to the MSCI EMU Index with returns measured in U.S. dollars, from 12/31/14 to 2/17/15. <sup>4</sup>Euro-area equities or euro-area stocks refers to the performance of the MSCI EMU Local Currency Index. <sup>5</sup>Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg, with period measured from 12/31/14 to 2/13/15. <sup>6</sup>Refers to the WisdomTree Europe Hedged Equity Index. <sup>7</sup>Layering refers to the additional risk currency can add to a portfolio <sup>8</sup>As of 2/6/15, Daimler represented a 4.78% weight within HEDJ. <sup>9</sup>As of 2/6/15, Sanofi represented a 4.53% weight within HEDJ. <sup>10</sup>As of 2/6/15, LVMH represented a 2.93% weight within HEDJ.

#### Important Risks Related to this Article

There are risks associated with investing, including possible loss of principal. Foreign investing involves special risks, such as risk of loss from currency fluctuation or political or economic uncertainty. Investments in currency involve additional special risks, such as credit risk and interest rate fluctuations. Derivative investments can be volatile, and these investments may be less liquid than other securities, and more sensitive to the effects of varied economic conditions. As this Fund can have a high concentration in some issuers, the Fund can be adversely impacted by changes affecting those issuers. Due to the investment strategy of this Fund, it may make higher capital gain distributions than other ETFs. Please read the Fund's prospectus for specific details regarding the Fund's risk profile. Dividends are not guaranteed, and a

company's future ability to pay dividends may be limited. A company currently paying dividends may cease paying dividends at any time.

For standardized performance and the most recent month-end performance click [here](#) NOTE, this material is intended for electronic use only. Individuals who intend to print and physically deliver to an investor must print the monthly performance report to accompany this blog.

For more investing insights, check out our [Economic & Market Outlook](#)

View the online version of this article [here](#).

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**U.S. investors only: Click [here](#) to obtain a WisdomTree ETF prospectus which contains investment objectives, risks, charges, expenses, and other information; read and consider carefully before investing.**

There are risks involved with investing, including possible loss of principal. Foreign investing involves currency, political and economic risk. Funds focusing on a single country, sector and/or funds that emphasize investments in smaller companies may experience greater price volatility. Investments in emerging markets, currency, fixed income and alternative investments include additional risks. Please see prospectus for discussion of risks.

Past performance is not indicative of future results. This material contains the opinions of the author, which are subject to change, and should not to be considered or interpreted as a recommendation to participate in any particular trading strategy, or deemed to be an offer or sale of any investment product and it should not be relied on as such. There is no guarantee that any strategies discussed will work under all market conditions. This material represents an assessment of the market environment at a specific time and is not intended to be a forecast of future events or a guarantee of future results. This material should not be relied upon as research or investment advice regarding any security in particular. The user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of the information provided herein. Neither WisdomTree nor its affiliates, nor Foreside Fund Services, LLC, or its affiliates provide tax or legal advice. Investors seeking tax or legal advice should consult their tax or legal advisor. Unless expressly stated otherwise the opinions, interpretations or findings expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of WisdomTree or any of its affiliates.

The MSCI information may only be used for your internal use, may not be reproduced or re-disseminated in any form and may not be used as a basis for or component of any financial instruments or products or indexes. None of the MSCI information is intended to constitute investment advice or a recommendation to make (or refrain from making) any kind of investment decision and may not be relied on as such. Historical data and analysis should not be taken as an indication or guarantee of any future performance analysis, forecast or prediction. The MSCI information is provided on an "as is" basis and the user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of this information. MSCI, each of its affiliates and each entity involved in compiling, computing or creating any MSCI information (collectively, the "MSCI Parties") expressly disclaims all warranties. With respect to this information, in no event shall any MSCI Party have any liability for any direct, indirect, special, incidental, punitive, consequential (including loss profits) or any other damages ([www.msci.com](http://www.msci.com))

Jonathan Steinberg, Jeremy Schwartz, Rick Harper, Christopher Gannatti, Bradley Krom, Tripp Zimmerman, Michael Barrer, Anita Rausch, Kevin Flanagan, Brendan Loftus, Joseph Tenaglia, Jeff Weniger, Matt Wagner, Alejandro Saltiel, Ryan Krystopowicz, Jianing Wu, and Brian Manby are registered representatives of Foreside Fund Services, LLC.

WisdomTree Funds are distributed by Foreside Fund Services, LLC, in the U.S. only.

You cannot invest directly in an index.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**S&P 500 Index** : Market capitalization-weighted benchmark of 500 stocks selected by the Standard and Poor's Index Committee designed to represent the performance of the leading industries in the United States economy.

**MSCI EMU Local Currency Index** : captures large- and mid-cap representation across the 11 developed market countries in the EMU and provides local currency returns, which are not translated back to U.S. dollars.

**Risk** : Also standard deviation, which measures the spread of actual returns around an average return during a specific period. Higher risk indicates greater potential for returns to be farther away from this average.

**Quantitative Easing (QE)** : A government monetary policy occasionally used to increase the money supply by buying government securities or other securities from the market. Quantitative easing increases the money supply by flooding financial institutions with capital, in an effort to promote increased lending and liquidity.

**Dividend** : A portion of corporate profits paid out to shareholders.

**Earnings per share** : Total earnings divided by the number of shares outstanding. Measured as a percentage change as of the annual Index screening date compared to the prior 12 months. Higher values indicate greater growth orientation.