

The week in seven charts



Trade wars and tariffs

More trade war tariffs have been collected under Biden than Trump, but U.S. tariffs remain among the lowest in the developed world. Meanwhile, gold prices hit new highs. Each week, the Syz investment team takes you through the last seven days in seven charts.

Charles-Henry Monchau, CFA, CAIA, CMT

Chief Investment Officer

Chart #1

Global central banks have NEVER been buying so much gold before:

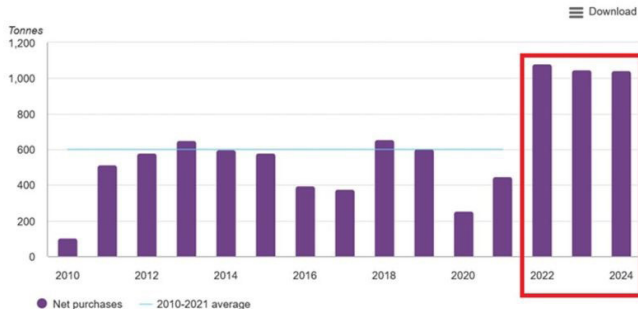
Gold keeps trading at record highs on the back of increasing demand by central banks.

Indeed, central banks acquired 1,045 tonnes of gold in 2024, marking the 3rd consecutive year of purchases surpassing 1,000 tonnes.

Over the last 3 years, central banks bought more gold than in 6 years before 2022.

Chart 9: Central banks have been net buyers for 15 consecutive years

Annual central bank net purchases, tonnes*



Sources: Metals Focus, Refinitiv GFMS, World Gold Council; Disclaimer

*Data to 31 December 2024.

Source: Global Markets Investor

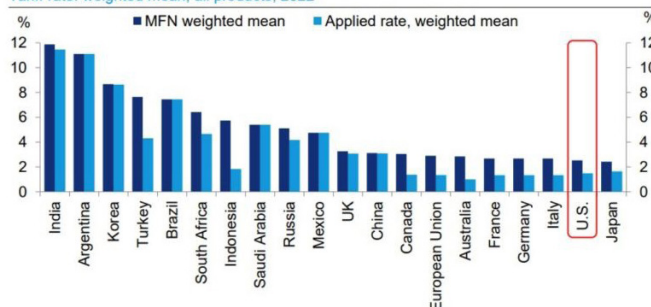
Chart #2

US tariffs are among the lowest in the developed world

Believe it or not, but the US has one of the lowest tariff rates in the developed world. See chart below courtesy of DB.

NB: Most Favoured Nations (MFN) Weighted Mean Tariff is the average of most favoured nation rates weighted by the product import shares corresponding to each partner country.

Tariff rate: weighted mean, all products, 2022



Source: DB

Chart #3

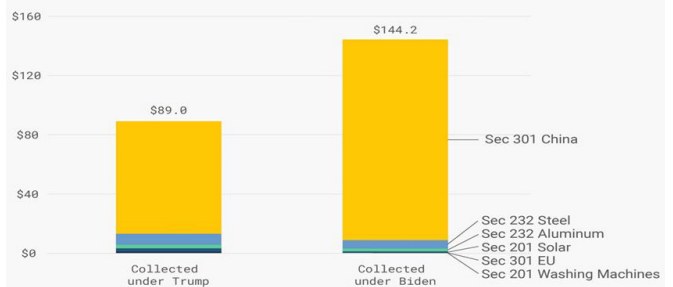
More trade war tariffs have been collected under Biden than under Trump

The chart reveals an intriguing trend: while trade war tariffs are a cornerstone of Trump's administration, it is under President Biden that collections have reached even higher levels. With \$144.2 billion collected during Biden's term compared to \$89.0 billion under Trump, most of these tariffs come from Section 301 measures targeting China.

This highlights how, despite receiving less media attention than during Trump's presidency, tariffs remained a key element of U.S. trade policy under Biden.

More Trade War Tariffs Have Been Collected Under Biden than Trump

Total Duties Assessed under Section 201, Section 232, and Section 301 Trade War Tariffs, in Billions



Source: Tax Foundation calculations based on U.S. Customs and Border Protection, "Trade Statistics," <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/trade>

Source: Tax foundation

Chart #4

Here's why Canada and Mexico reacted swiftly

The chart below - courtesy of LSEG - explains why Canada and Mexico reacted swiftly after Trump imposed 25% tariffs on imports.

The graph highlights their significant reliance on the U.S. market, with around 80% of their respective total exports directed toward the United States. This heavy dependence made swift reactions crucial to protect their economies and mitigate the impact of such tariffs. In comparison, other nations like China and Germany are far less dependent on the U.S. for exports, enabling them to absorb the impact of such trade policies more effectively.

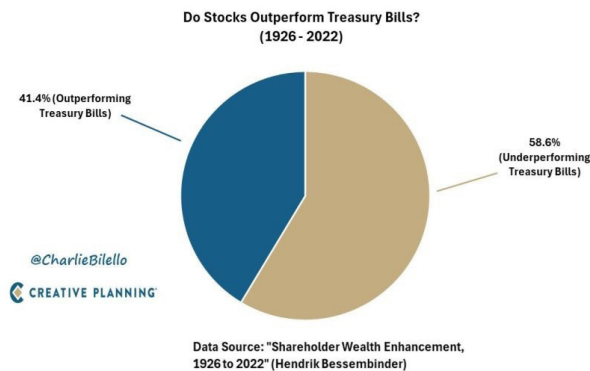


Source: LSEG Datastream

Chart #5

The art of stock picking

A majority of stocks (59%) underperform Treasury bills over their lifetime and more than half end up having a negative cumulative return. "Don't look for the needle in the haystack. Just buy the haystack." - Jack Bogle



Source: Charlie Bilello, Peter Malouk

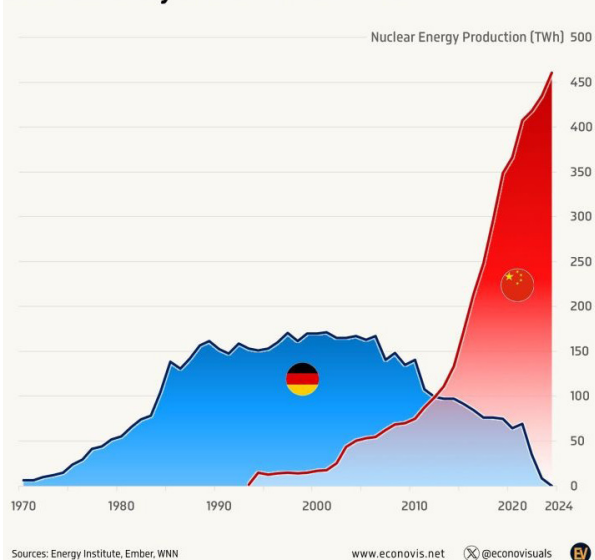
Chart #6

The divergence in nuclear policy between Germany and China

Germany decided to shut down nuclear power plants and to keep coal instead. Meanwhile, China keeps ramping up their nuclear investments.

From 2006 to 2023, China's nuclear energy production surged by 690%, rising from 55 TWh to 435 TWh. Russia, a major fossil fuel producer, saw a 39% increase, from 156 TWh to 217 TWh. Meanwhile, Germany's nuclear output plummeted from 167 TWh to zero, making it the only major economy to fully phase out nuclear power. The country shut down its last nuclear plants in 2023, and 2024 marked the first year since 1962 with no nuclear electricity generation. Over the same period, global nuclear energy production (excluding Germany) grew by 3.2%, while U.S. production remained unchanged.

China's Nuclear Energy Boom vs. Germany's Total Phase-Out



Source: Chart @econovisuals thru Michel A.Arouet on X

Chart #7

China leads in coal consumption

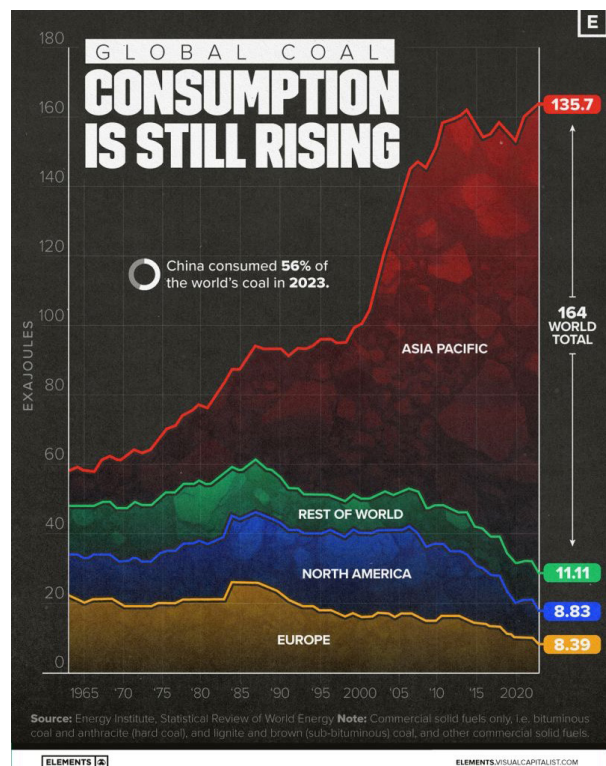
Despite efforts to decarbonise the economy, global coal consumption surpassed 164 exajoules for the first time in 2023. The fossil fuel still accounts for 26% of the world's total energy consumption.

In this graphic, we show global coal consumption by region from 1965 to 2023, based on data from the Energy Institute.

China is by far the largest consumer of coal, accounting for 56% of the global total, with 91.94 exajoules in 2023.

It is followed by India, with 21.98 exajoules, and the U.S., with 8.20 exajoules. In 2023, India exceeded the combined consumption of Europe and North America for the first time.

Regionally, North America and Europe have seen a decline in coal consumption since the 1990s, while the Asia-Pacific region experienced a surge in demand during the same period.



Source: Elements, Visual Capitalist

For further information

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