

The Next Phase of Alternatives Growth

Advisors Want More. Clients Want More. What's Holding Adoption Back?

2026 iCapital Asia Advisor Survey



What we heard from advisors

Across Asia's wealth management markets, conviction in alternatives has strengthened at the same time as confidence in the economic backdrop has fallen away. While our 2026 survey gathered insights from 870 registered financial professionals globally, this report highlights findings from the 62 respondents located in Hong Kong and Singapore. These professionals span multiple wealth manager channels, including private banks, IFAs, and family offices, and each serves a client base made up of at least 50% individuals and families. What advisors in the region are asking for has changed: The emphasis has shifted from gaining access to alternatives to securing the analytics, compliance support and implementation capabilities needed to invest with confidence and serve clients at scale.

Key Findings:

1. **Conviction has outpaced confidence.** Allocation intentions rose sharply while confidence in the economic outlook fell across every horizon measured, the steepest sentiment decline of any region surveyed.
2. **Risk analytics is now the top technology priority.** Demand rose 22 percentage points year over year to lead the region, displacing the transactional and CRM integrations that ranked highest in 2025.
3. **Compliance is the fastest-growing challenge.** Regulatory concerns rose 15 percentage points, while difficulty assessing liquidity and risk exposure remains the most cited obstacle.
4. **Last year's leading barrier has receded.** Client reporting, previously the top-ranked barrier in Asia, declined sharply; complexity in explaining alternatives now ranks first.
5. **Education demand is the most advanced of any region.** Advanced topics and technology and implementation lead, while interest in foundational content declined.

“ In terms of investment structure, liquidity needs are almost always more important than return targets. ”

— Advisor Perspective

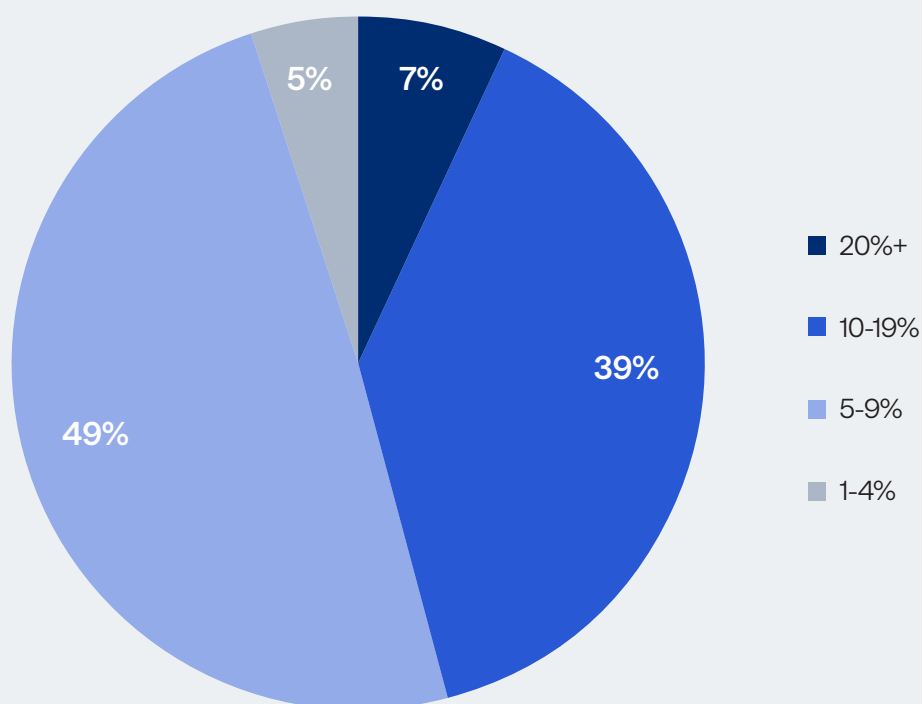
Adoption is wide but shallow

What percentage of your clients are allocating to alternative investments?

Seven in 10 Asian advisors now use alternative investments, but the asset class reaches only a narrow share of their clients. More than half of those advisors report that fewer than one in 10 clients invest in alternatives, and only 7% say more than one-fifth of their clients do so, the narrowest reach of any region surveyed. Because this question was asked for the first time in 2026, no prior-year comparison is available.

The constraint is not advisor conviction in the asset class. Almost nine in ten advisors describe themselves as confident in selecting and allocating alternatives within client portfolios, and allocation intentions rose sharply over the past year. The difficulty lies in translating that conviction across an entire client base rather than a subset.

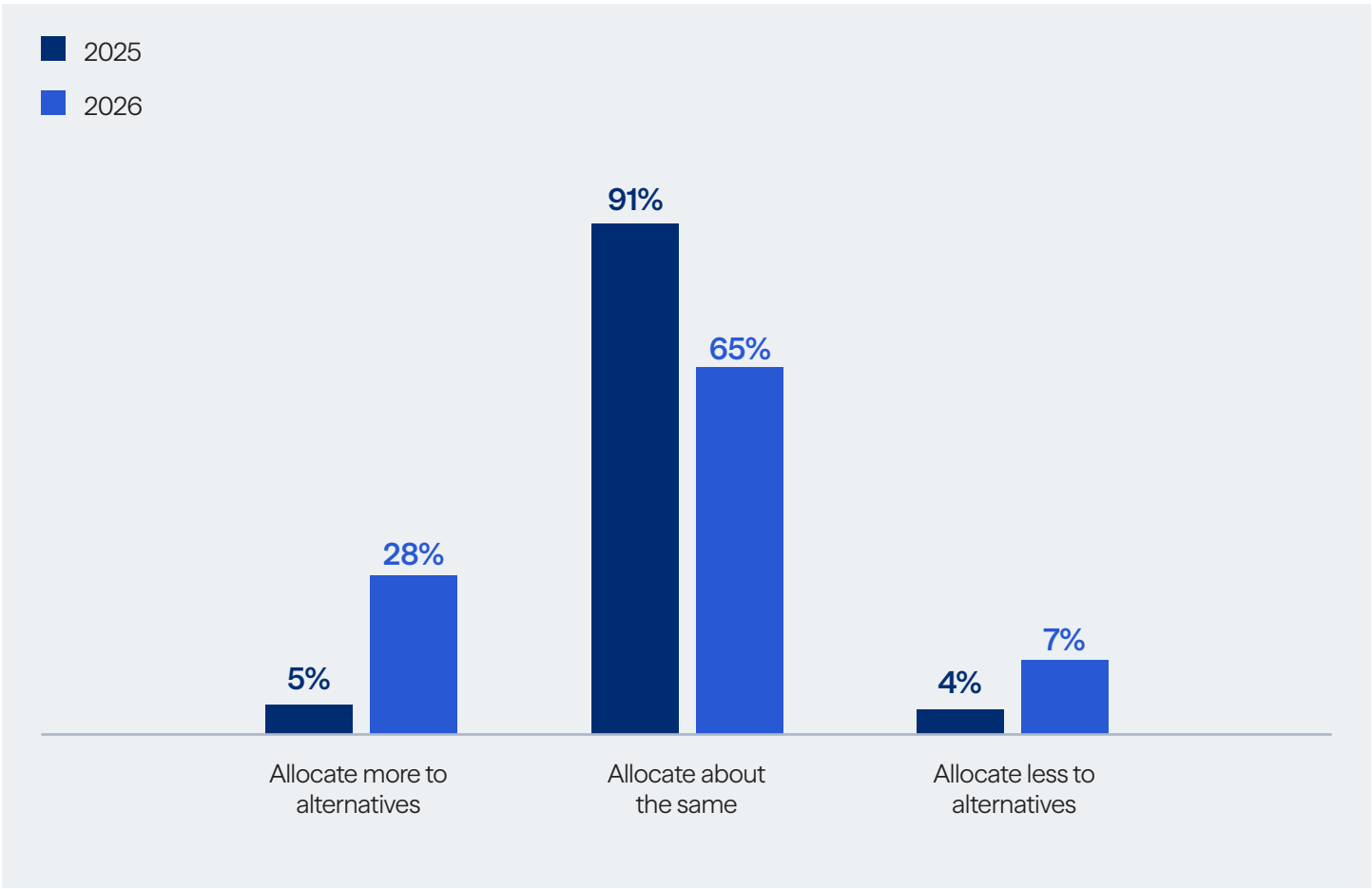
This reframes the challenges advisors identify elsewhere in this survey. Liquidity and risk assessment, compliance, and the complexity of explaining alternatives are obstacles to scale rather than to entry. Asian firms have established that alternatives belong in client portfolios. The harder question is how to extend them beyond the clients who already hold them.



Allocation intent has risen even as confidence has fallen

Over the next 12 months, do you plan to allocate more, less, or the same to alternative investments?

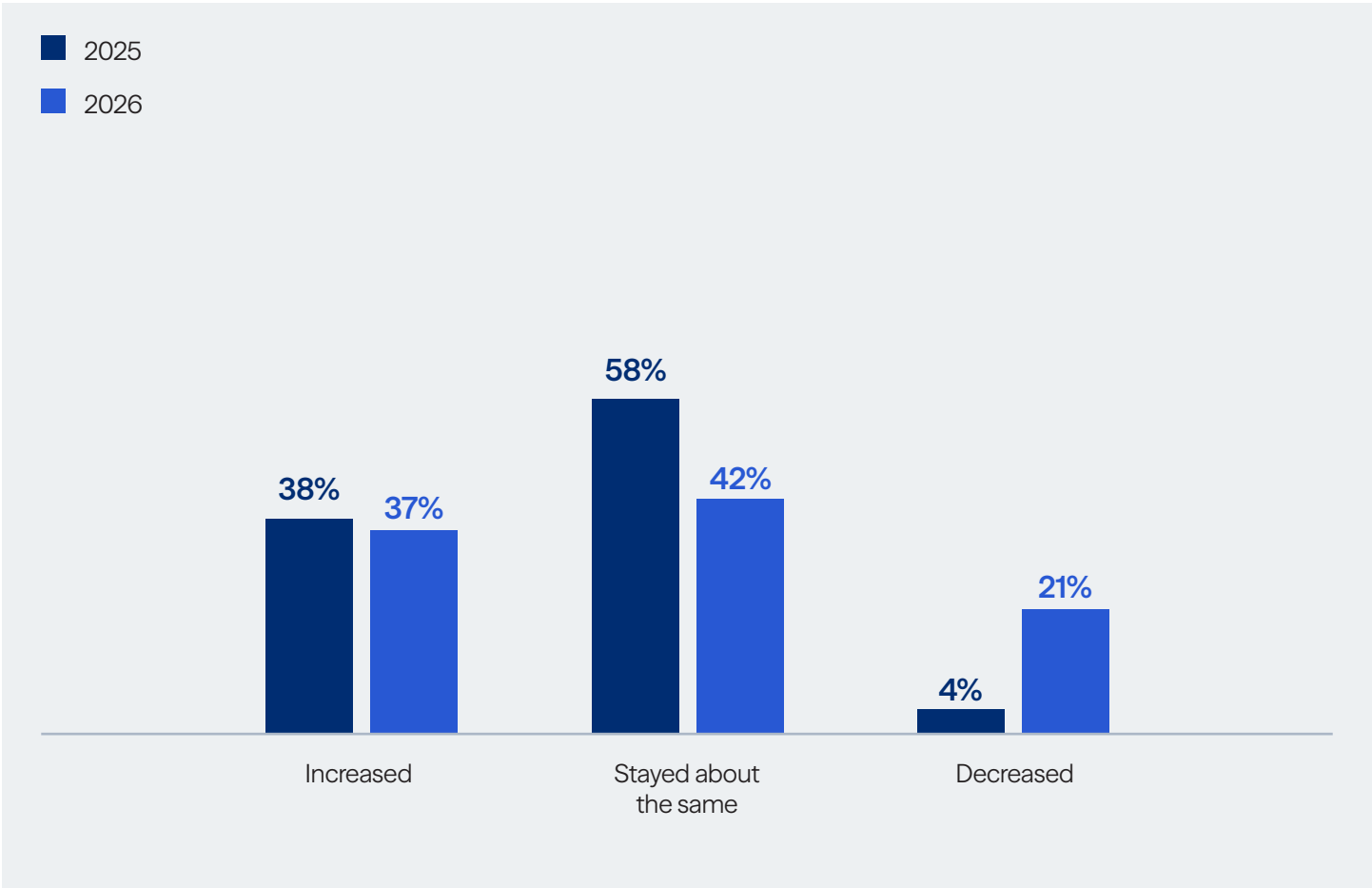
More than a quarter of advisors in Asia plan to increase allocations to alternatives, well above the share recorded in 2025, while the share planning to maintain current allocations has declined. Advisors appear to be treating alternatives as a long-term portfolio allocation rather than responding to near-term conditions.



In Asia, client interest is polarizing

Compared with two years ago, has client interest in alternative investments increased, decreased or stayed about the same?

The share of advisors reporting increased client interest remained broadly stable, while the share reporting a decrease rose and the share seeing no change contracted. Client interest in the region is becoming more polarized rather than increasing uniformly.



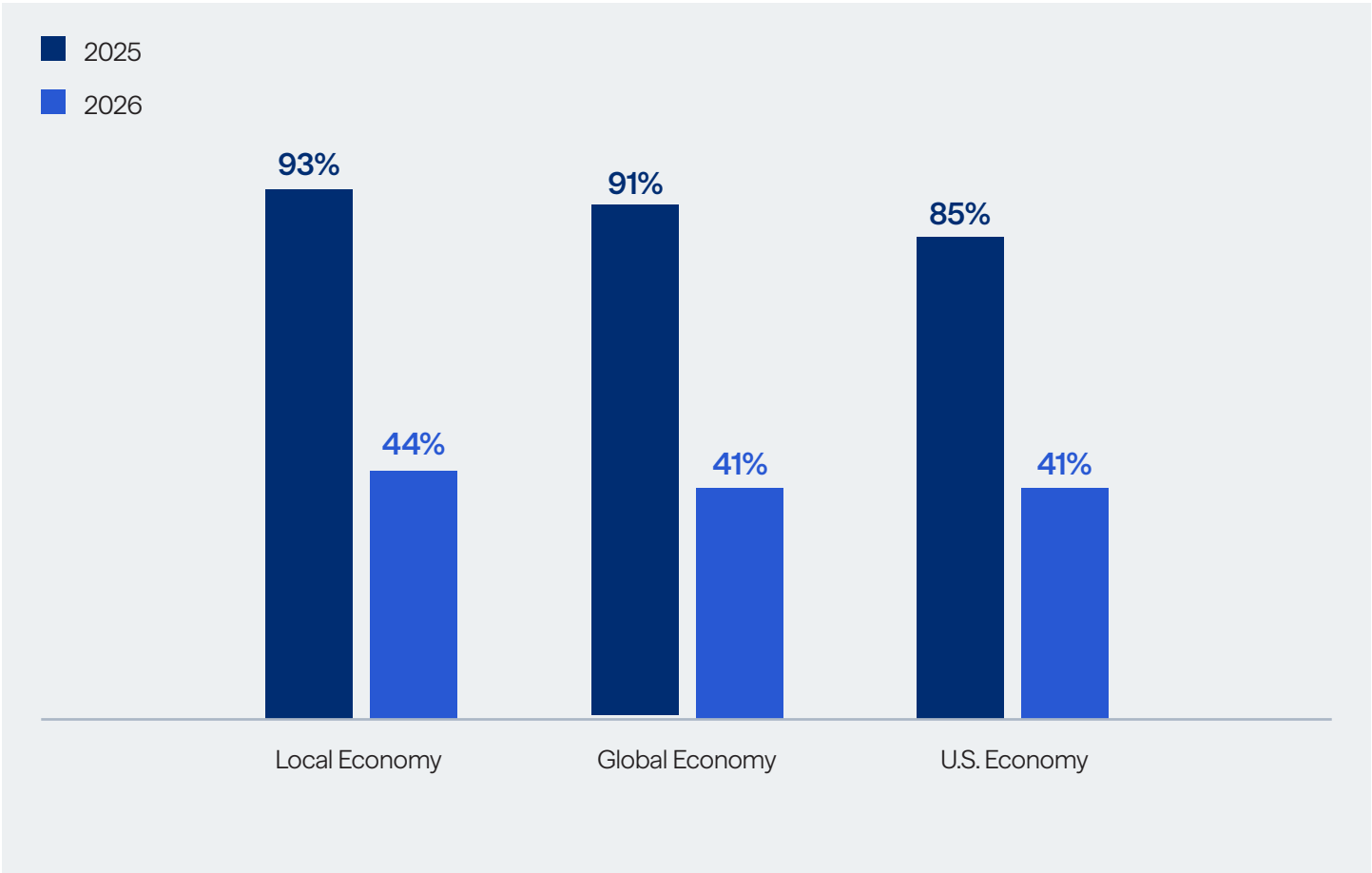
Economic confidence fell sharply across every horizon

What is your outlook for the U.S., global and local economies over the next 12 months?

Positive sentiment roughly halved across all three measures, the steepest decline recorded in any region this year. The rise in allocation intentions over the same period suggests that advisors increasingly view alternatives as structural rather than tactical allocations.

The survey period coincided with a more challenging external backdrop marked by trade-policy uncertainty, a Middle East energy shock, softer Chinese demand, and continued uncertainty around U.S. inflation, interest rates and the dollar. Together, these factors may have increased downside risks for Asia's export- and energy-import-dependent economies and likely weighed on confidence across local, global and U.S. economic outlooks.

Positive sentiment (very positive plus somewhat positive):



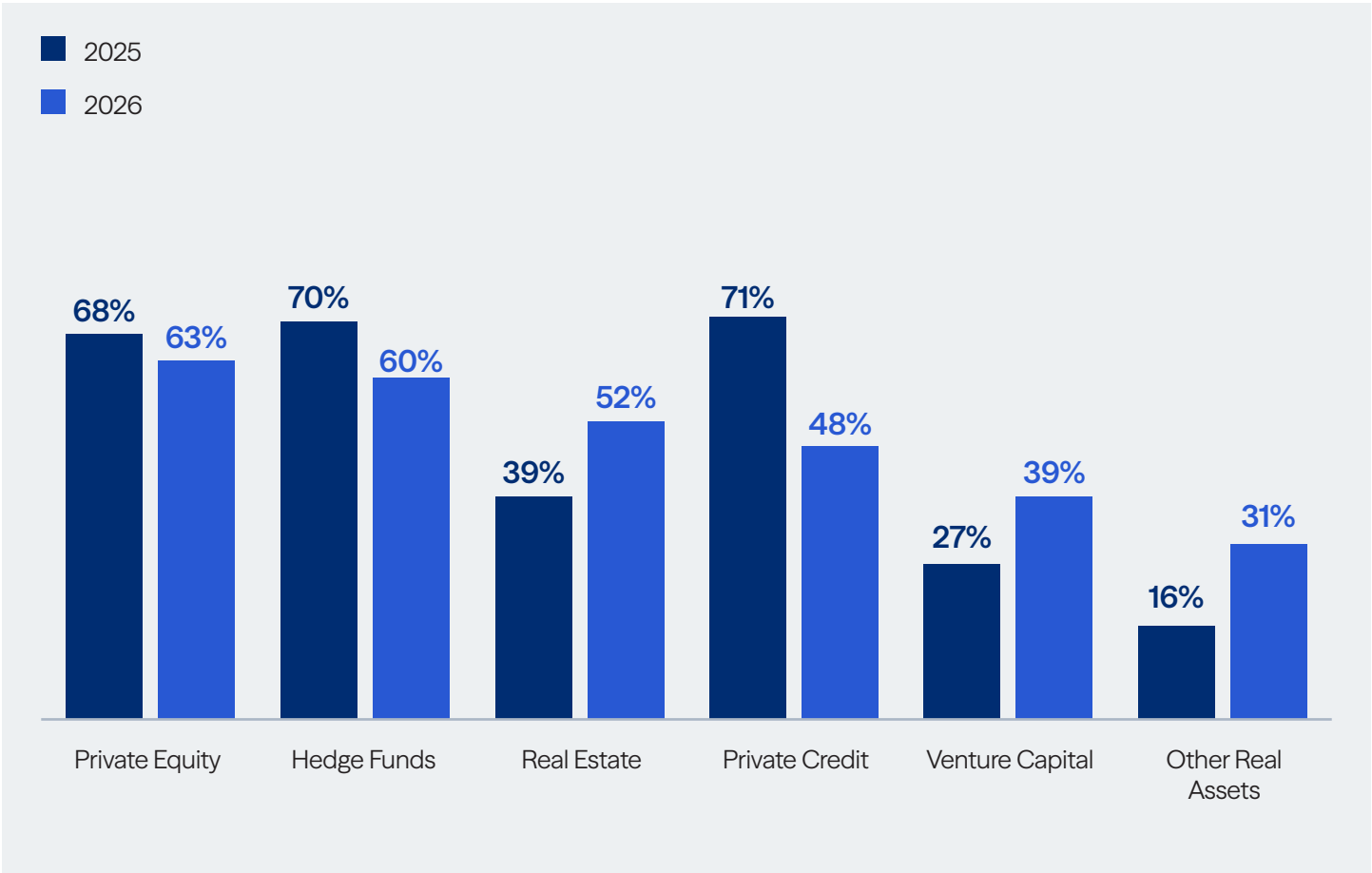
In Asia, interest rotates from private credit to real assets

Which types of alternative investments are you most interested in allocating to on behalf of your clients?

Private credit, the leading area of interest in 2025 and the defining feature of last year's Asia findings, fell 23 percentage points. Real estate, other real assets, and venture capital all rose by double digits, while private equity and hedge funds held broadly steady.

The rotation toward real assets comes as geopolitical disruption and energy-security concerns have increased focus on inflation resilience and tangible assets. The jump in real assets is consistent with increased global interest in infrastructure investments.

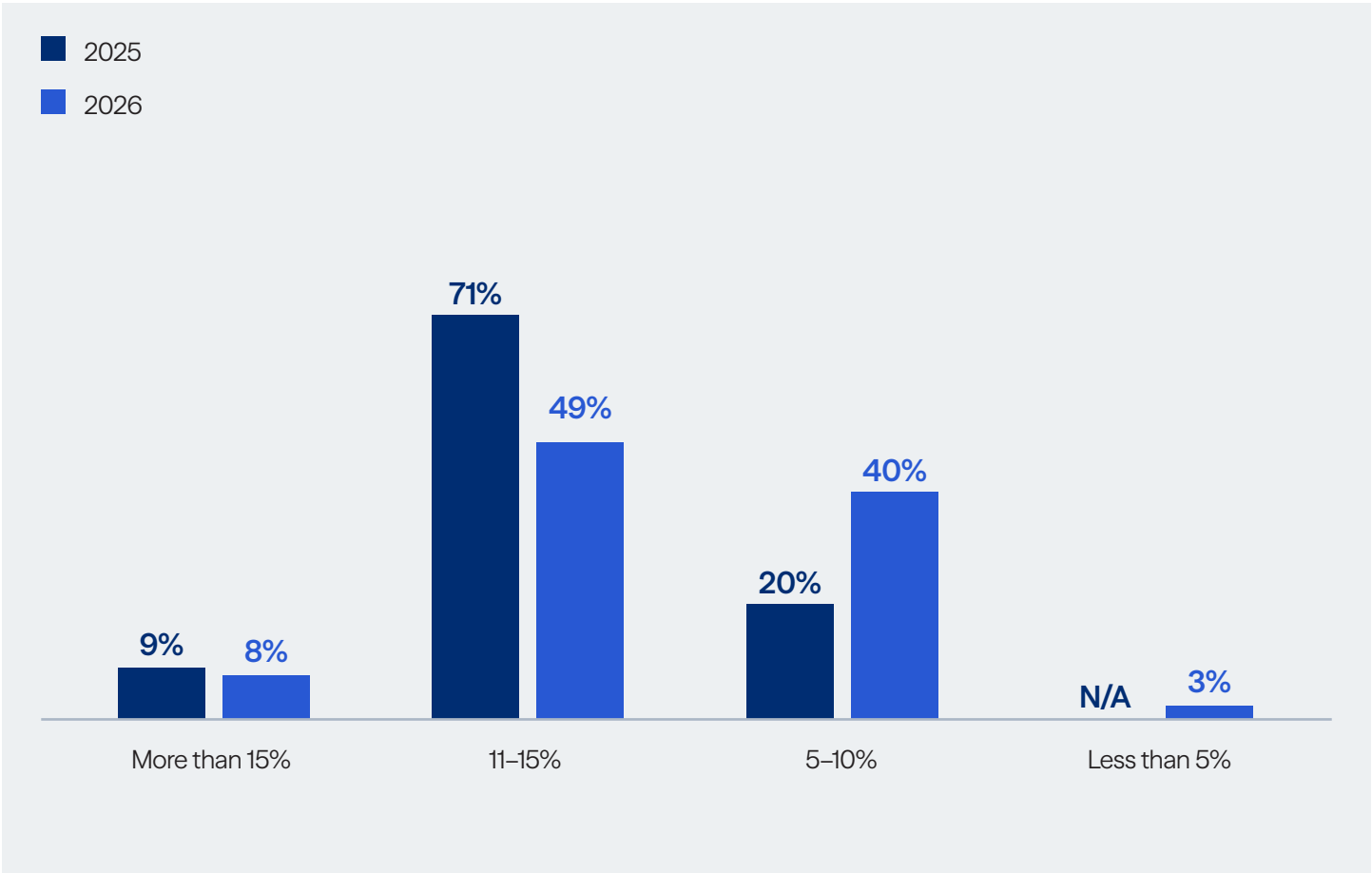
Meanwhile, the rise in venture capital interest is consistent with a robust capital markets backdrop in Asia in 2026, particularly for AI-related portfolio companies. Technology investment across APAC has become a leading topic in client conversations.



Evergreen expectations moderate

What do you anticipate will be your client's average exposure to evergreen strategies in the next two years?

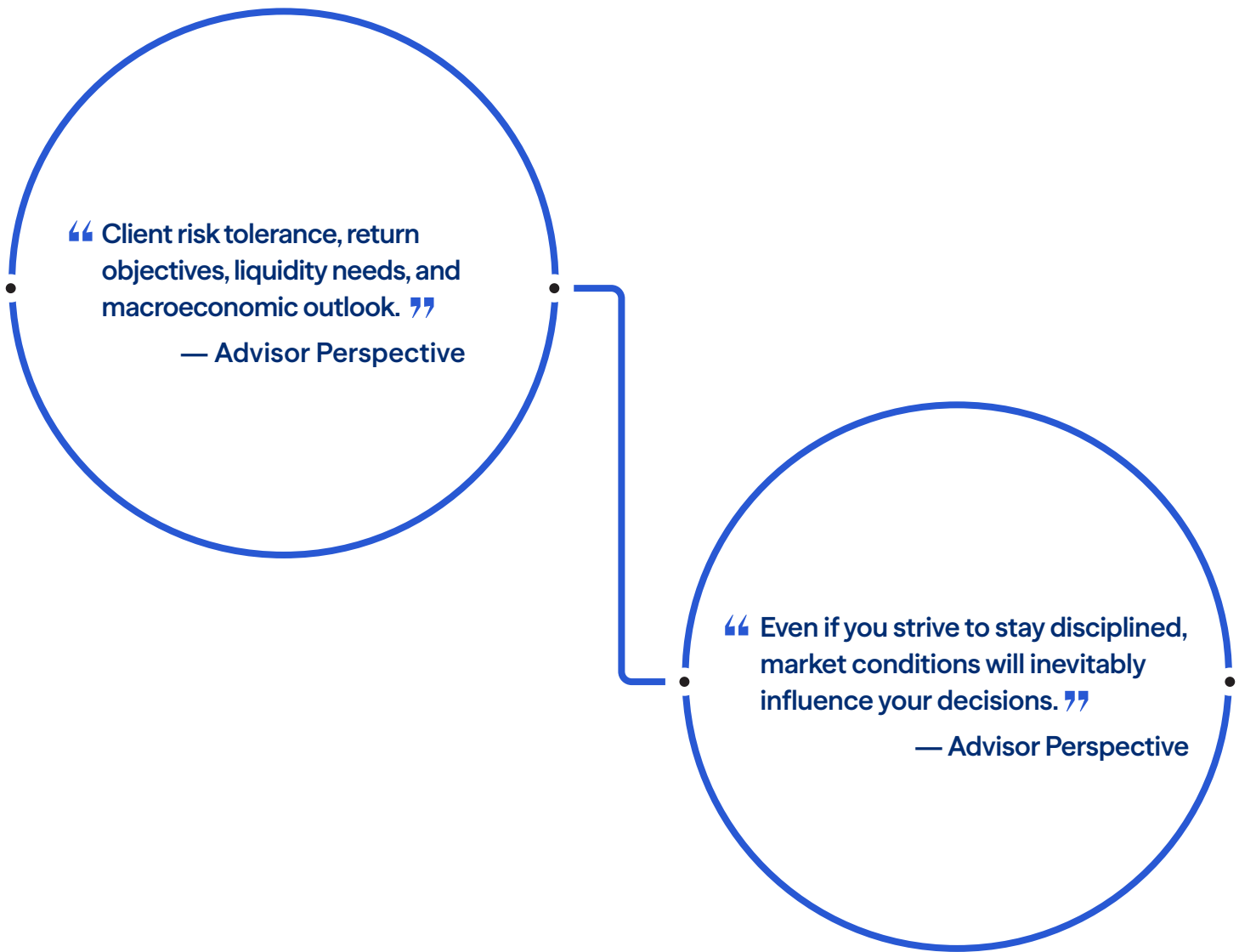
Just over half of advisors still expect client allocations above 11%, down from four in five, with the movement concentrated in a shift out of the 11% to 15% range and into the 5% to 10% range. Expectations are being calibrated rather than abandoned.



Portfolio construction is shaped by market conditions and client risk tolerance

What factors most influence your portfolio construction approach?

In open-ended responses, advisors in Asia describe an approach anchored in client risk tolerance and return objectives, but with market conditions and volatility featuring more prominently than in other regions. That sensitivity is understandable in a region where tariffs, oil prices and currency moves can transmit quickly into growth, inflation and portfolio returns.



“ Client risk tolerance, return objectives, liquidity needs, and macroeconomic outlook. ”

— Advisor Perspective

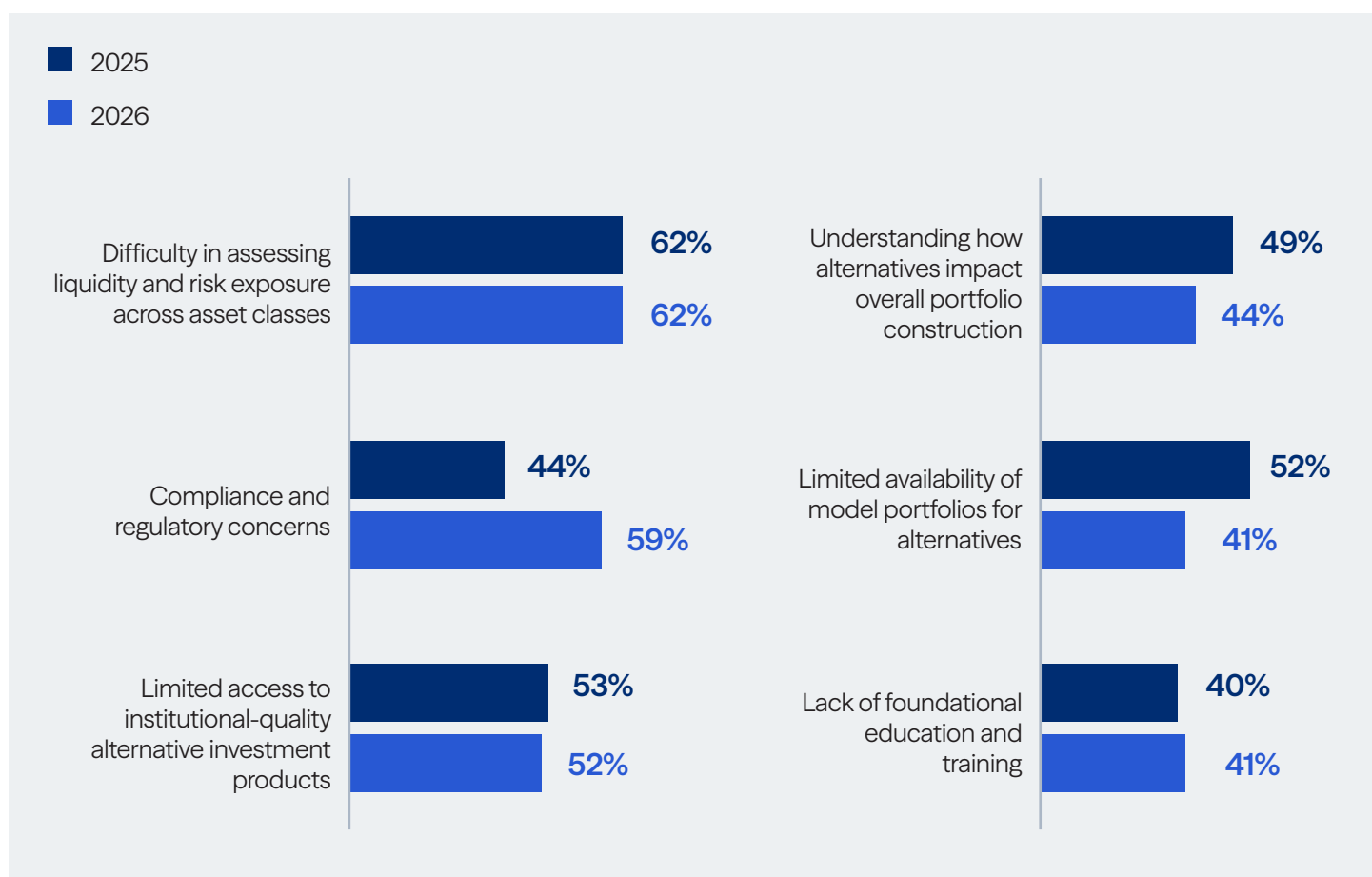
“ Even if you strive to stay disciplined, market conditions will inevitably influence your decisions. ”

— Advisor Perspective

In Asia, compliance is the fastest-growing challenge

What are the biggest challenges in incorporating alternatives into your firm's investment models and asset allocation strategies?

Difficulty assessing liquidity and risk exposure remains the most cited challenge, unchanged year over year. The notable change is in compliance and regulatory concerns, the only measure in this question to rise significantly.

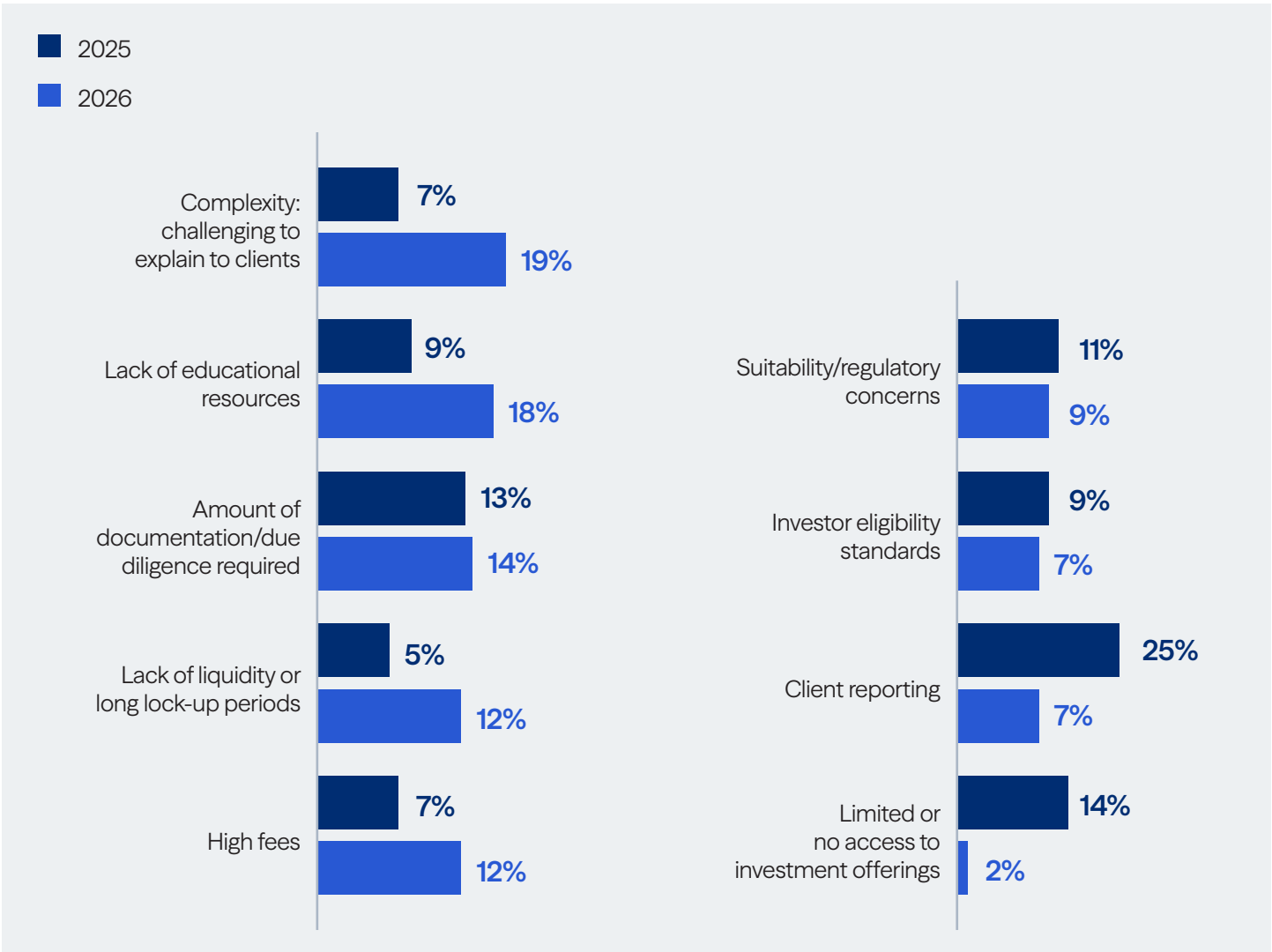


Complexity replaces client reporting as the leading barrier

Which of the following are barriers to using alternative investments more?

Client reporting, the top-ranked barrier in Asia last year, fell 18 percentage points. Complexity in explaining alternatives to clients now ranks first, and lack of educational resources has doubled, pointing to a knowledge gap rather than an infrastructure one.

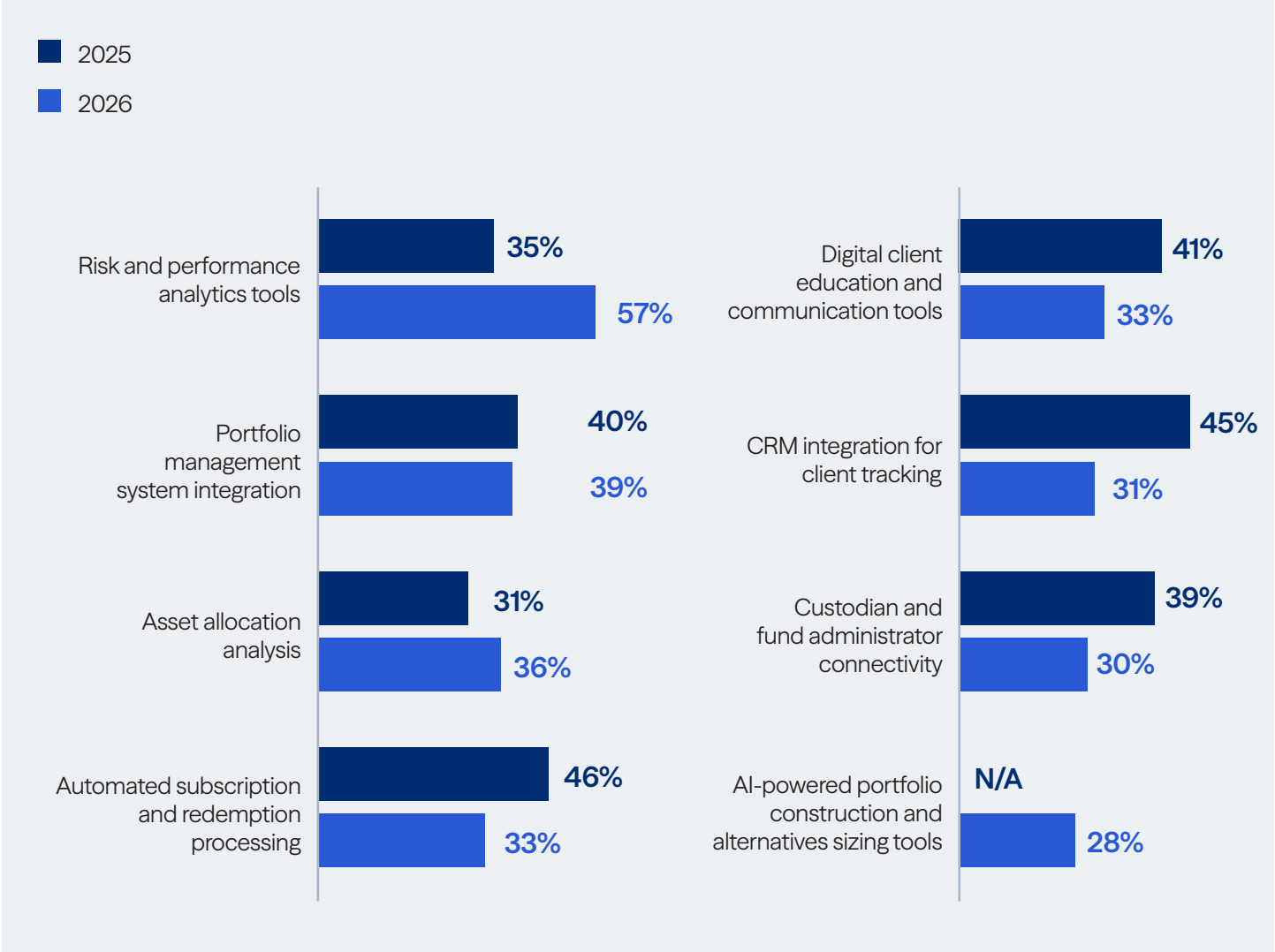
Ranked No. 1 by advisors



In Asia, risk analytics has become the top technology priority

Which technology and partner integrations are most critical to implementing an alternative investment strategy?

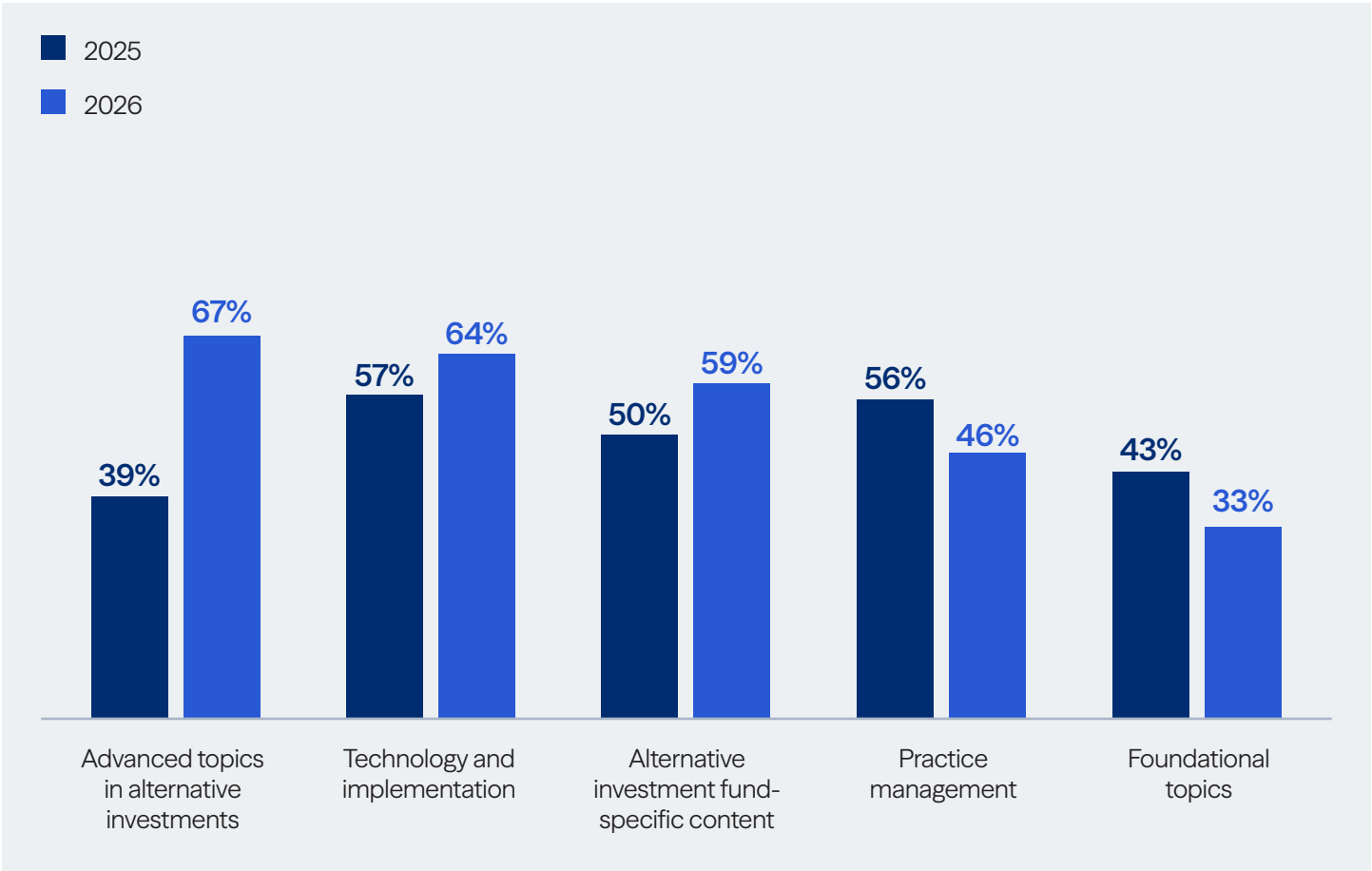
Risk and performance analytics rose 22 percentage points to lead the region by a clear margin, while CRM integration and automated subscription processing, both among the highest priorities in 2025, fell back. Demand has shifted from transactional infrastructure toward analytical capabilities.



Demand is shifting toward advanced education

What alternative investment topics would be of interest to you?

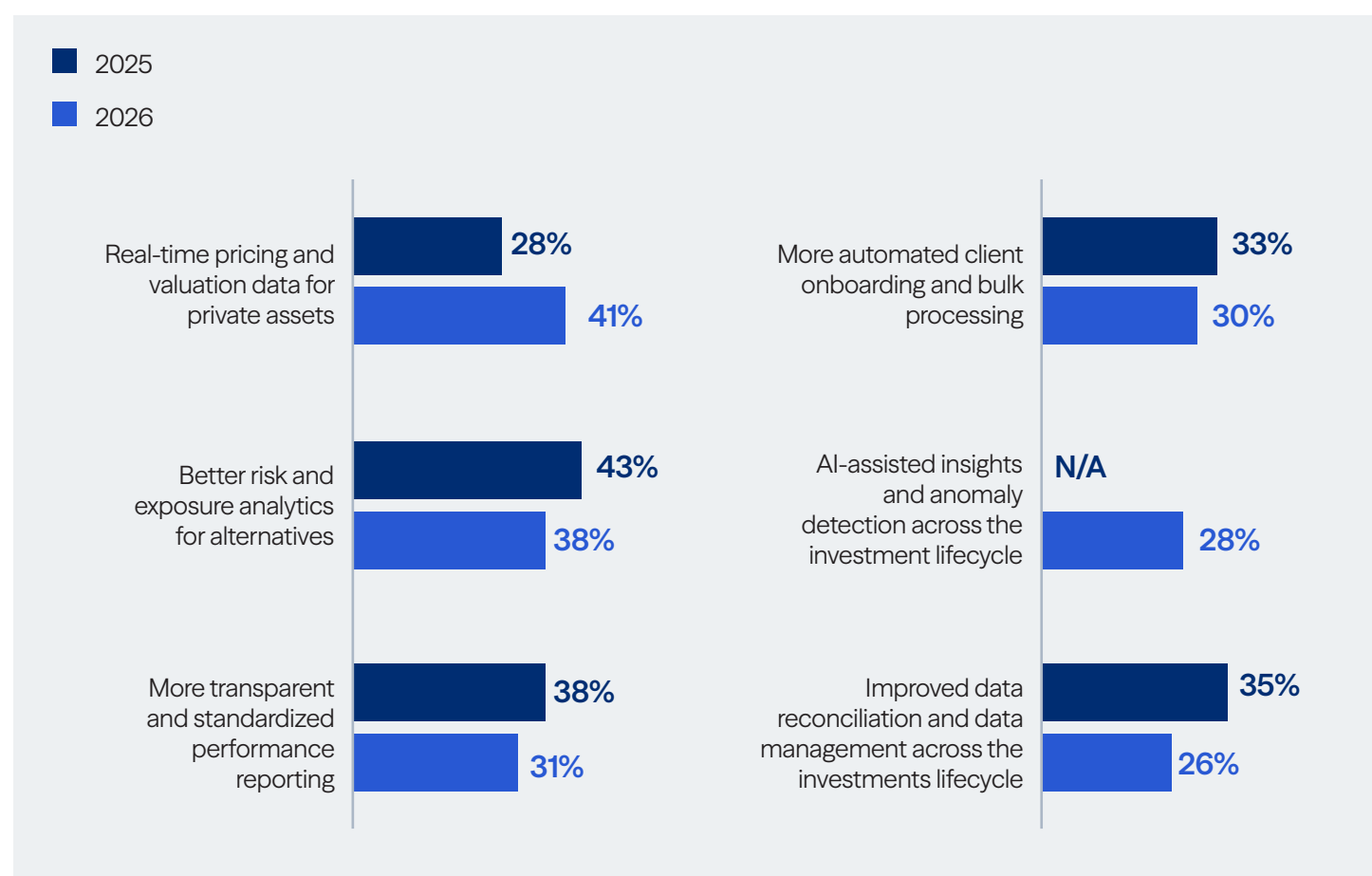
Two-thirds of advisors selected advanced topics, the highest share of any education category in the region, followed by demand for technology and implementation content. Interest in foundational content fell, and practice management declined. Asia records the highest demand for advanced material of any region surveyed.



Advisors want real-time pricing and valuation data

What improvements in data and reporting would most enhance your firm's ability to manage alternative investments?

Real-time pricing and valuation data for private assets rose 13 percentage points to lead the region, consistent with the shift toward analytical capabilities seen elsewhere in the findings. Demand for improved data reconciliation and data management declined.

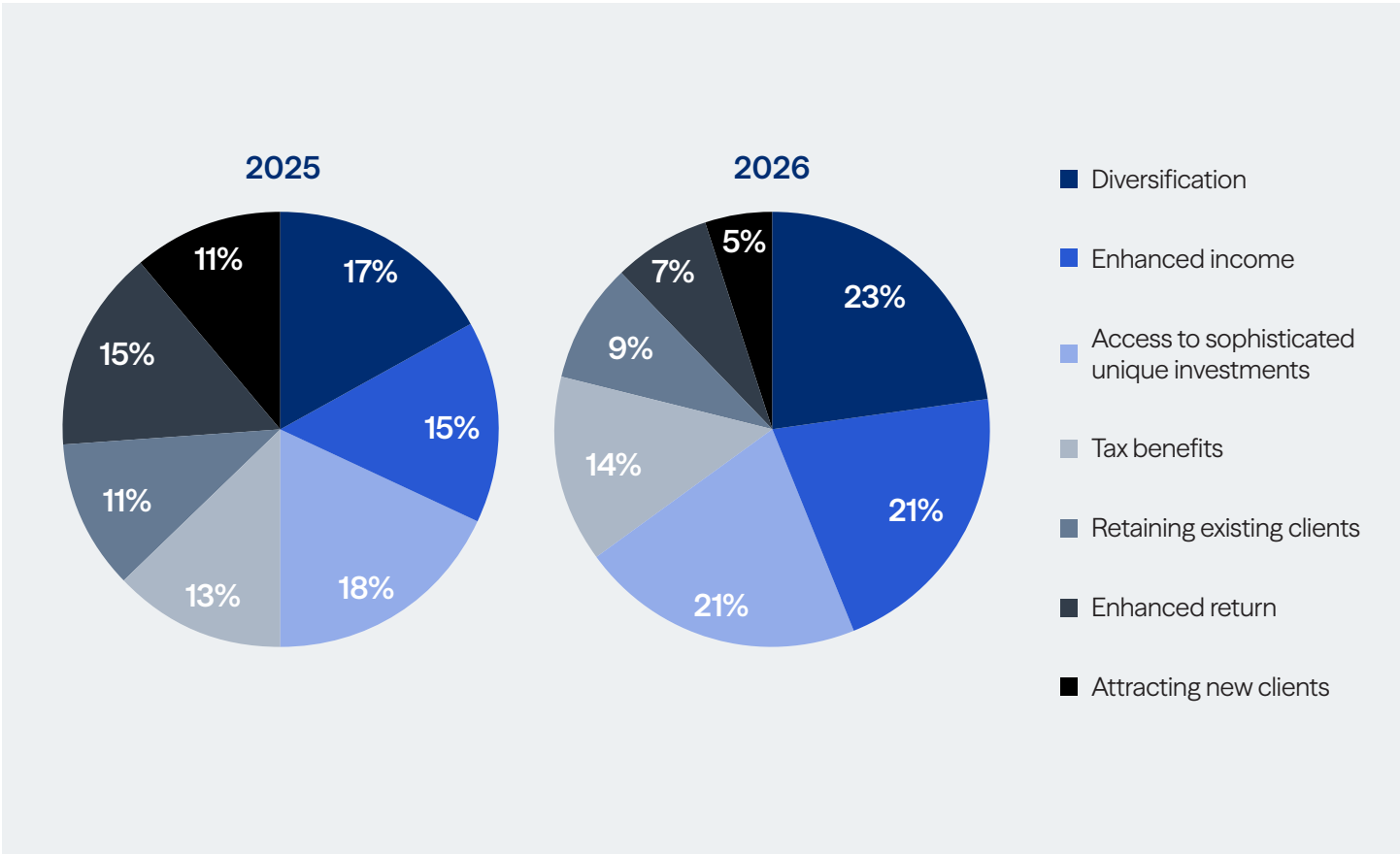


Advisors use alternatives for diversification and income

Which of the following describes why you use alternative investments?

Diversification leads on first-place rankings, followed by enhanced income and access to sophisticated strategies. Enhanced return and attracting new clients both declined, reflecting a different emphasis from the growth-led rationale reported in other regions. The emphasis on diversification and income is consistent with a macroeconomic environment in which growth, inflation and policy paths have become less synchronized across Asia and major global economies. It also aligns with the marked decline in advisors' confidence in local, global and U.S. economic outlooks.

Ranked No. 1 by advisors



From access to capability

The next phase of growth in Asia may depend less on expanding access to alternatives and more on helping advisors manage them. As alternatives become a more established part of client portfolios, firms increasingly require the analytical, compliance, and implementation capabilities needed to support them across a broader range of client portfolios. Advisor priorities are shifting beyond education and access toward risk assessment, portfolio oversight, and governance, while educational demand continues to move toward more advanced and implementation-focused topics. Firms that lead may be those that help advisors navigate the complexity that emerges once alternatives become a structural part of the investment process.

The next competitive advantage may not be creating more interest in alternatives. It may be helping advisors translate growing conviction into scalable portfolio outcomes through stronger analytics, better risk visibility, and more effective compliance support.

The implications for wealth managers

Advisors in Asia are committing to alternatives at a time of falling economic confidence, making the case for alternatives more demanding, not less. The constraints they report are analytical: difficulty assessing liquidity and risk exposure remains the most cited challenge, compliance is the fastest-growing, and alternatives still reach only a narrow share of clients. That points to capability rather than access as the limit on growth. Firms extending alternatives further will need the risk tooling and regulatory capacity to support them across a wider client base, and should be clear with clients about why alternatives are being treated as structural rather than tactical.

The implications for asset managers

In Asia, risk and performance analytics have displaced transactional and CRM integrations as the leading technology priority, with compliance cited as the fastest-growing challenge in the region. As a result, the questions asked of a manager increasingly concern exposure, liquidity, and regulatory fit rather than the availability of a specific solution. Demand for educational content has moved further up the curve here than anywhere else surveyed, with advanced topics leading and interest in foundational content falling. The practical test is shifting from whether a product can be accessed to whether an advisor can assess its risks, meet compliance requirements and hold it with confidence.

Survey Methodology

The 2026 iCapital Global Advisor Survey captured a global view of advisor behavior while diving deeper into the operational and technology needs of firms. The survey was conducted in the first quarter of 2025 by a third-party research firm using telephone interviews with online follow-up. Respondents included financial professionals actively engaged in alternative investing across private banks, wealth managers, family offices and IFAs, representing firms with a range of assets under management. The survey engaged 603 respondents across nine countries in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific.

The 2026 Global Advisor Survey is iCapital's second annual global study of advisor behavior and the evolving needs of wealth management firms. Building on our inaugural survey, this year's research explores not only allocation trends and client demand, but also the operational, technology, and implementation challenges shaping the next phase of alternatives adoption.

The study was conducted during the first half of 2026 by an independent third-party research firm using telephone interviews with online follow-up. Respondents included financial professionals actively engaged in alternative investing across wealth management channels, including private banks, wealth managers, family offices and IFAs, and represented firms of various sizes.

The survey included 870 respondents across 15 countries spanning the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia-Pacific. Of those, 62 were located in Asia-Pacific, and this report presents their responses. To qualify, respondents had to be registered financial professionals serving client bases composed of at least 50% individuals or families.

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