The UBS Business Model: Risk-Aware, Broadly Diversified and Stable

Since the global financial crisis of 2008, UBS has fundamentally changed its business model and risk profile. The combined balance sheet of UBS and Credit Suisse is now more than 60% smaller than before the financial crisis, meaning that UBS is now less than half the size. Around 70% of assets today are attributable to stable, client-driven businesses – namely wealth management and asset management – as well as the Swiss universal bank; complementary investment bank activities contribute a maximum of 25% to risk-weighted assets. Through this strategic focus, UBS has substantially strengthened its stability and now applies the same standards in integrating Credit Suisse. The broad-based and risk-aware business model is fully in line with the Federal Council's strategy for a future-proof financial center, which is based on an optimal balance between competitiveness and stability. It enables UBS to provide Swiss companies and households with capital, advisory services, and expertise in their home market and worldwide.

Why the topic is important

Switzerland is a small home market, and UBS's balance sheet is comparatively large – however, UBS has significantly reduced the risk of its balance sheet through its business model. Since the financial crisis, UBS has shifted the focus of its business activities from the investment bank to wealth management, asset management, and its strong Swiss universal bank business (see Figure 1). Today, four out of five francs of its revenue come from these businesses (see Figure 2). They generate reliable, regular income – for example, from managing client assets or long-term client relationships – and are significantly less susceptible to market fluctuations and more resilient across economic cycles. In announcing the emergency takeover of Credit Suisse, the Board of Directors also stated that the Investment Bank would be limited to a maximum of 25% of risk-weighted assets – prior to the emergency takeover, the limit imposed by UBS itself was 33%. The Board of Directors thus sent an early signal that the now larger UBS would further reduce its risk profile.

Since the merger with Credit Suisse, UBS has consistently continued to reduce risk. Credit Suisse businesses are being integrated or – particularly in the Investment Bank – largely wound down or divested. Since the acquisition of Credit Suisse, the risk-weighted assets of the "Non-core and Legacy" (NCL) unit have been reduced by over USD 55 billion to USD 29 billion (approx. -67%) in the fourth quarter of 2025.

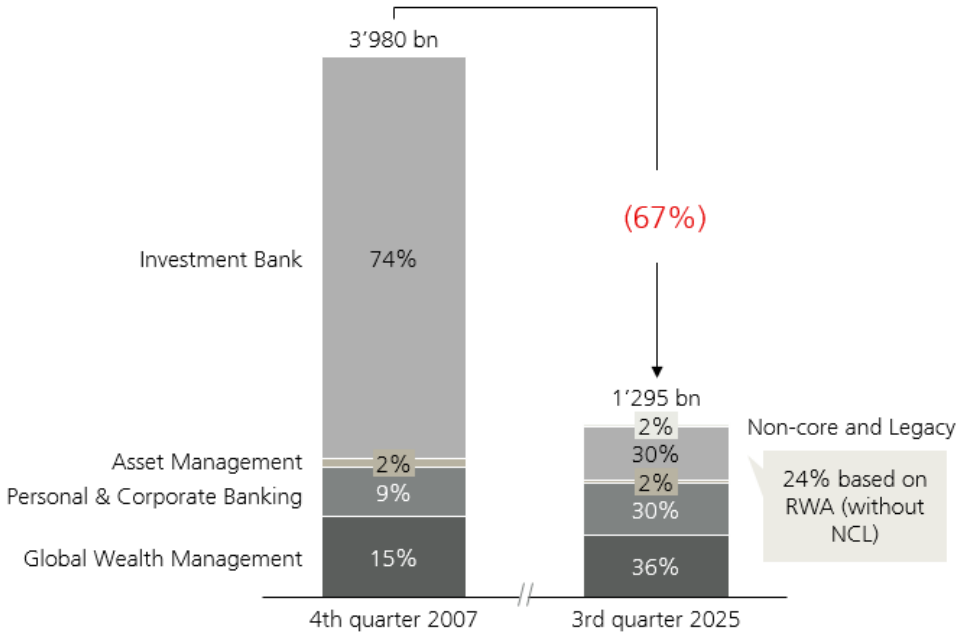
The acquisition of Credit Suisse has made UBS's business even more geographically diversified and thus even more stable. Today, UBS's revenues are distributed roughly equally between Switzerland, the US, EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Africa) and Asia. The regional distribution of business activities allows risks to be balanced and fluctuations in individual markets to be better cushioned. This strengthens an important anchor of stability for UBS and the Swiss financial center. During the Swiss real estate crisis of the 1990s, globally diversified banks created stability thanks to their broader business base and rescued several cantonal banks.

UBS's sustainably profitable business model is underpinned by a strong capital and liquidity position as well as a strong corporate culture. UBS has a CET1 ratio of around 14%, which is more than 2 percentage points above the regulatory requirements for 2030. The core values of "Capital strength", "Risk management", "Client centricity", "Sustainable impact", and "Accountability with integrity" guide all of UBS's business decisions. However, these values will only strengthen stability in the long term if UBS can continue to pursue a competitive business model. Only in this way can it be sustainably profitable, effectively prevent crises, and make a reliable contribution to Swiss tax revenues.

UBS's position

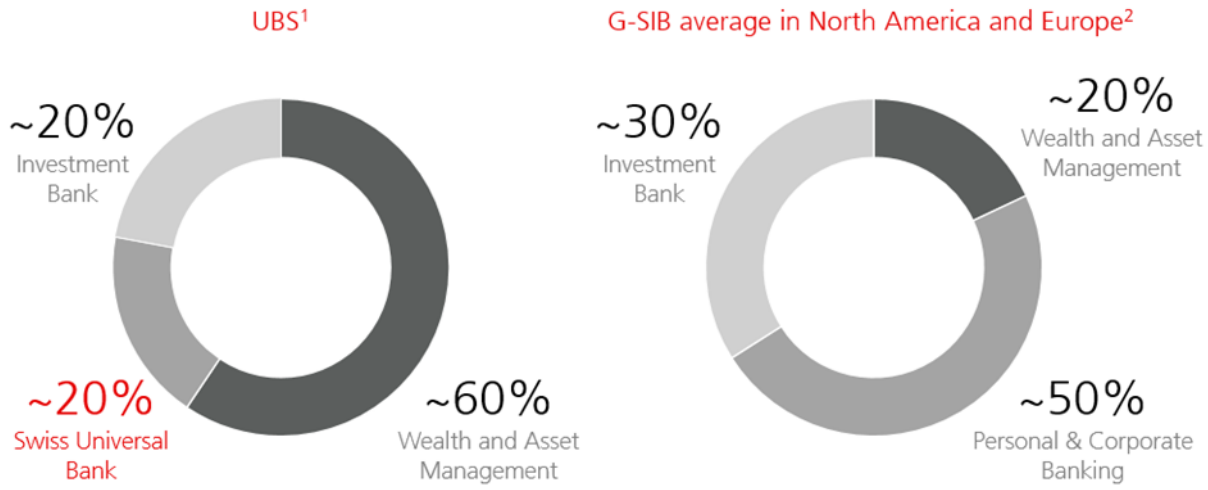
UBS relies on its sustainably profitable and stable business model as a leading global wealth manager and strong Swiss universal bank. Its complementary and focused Investment Bank helps UBS offer services tailored to the needs of its wealthy clients worldwide and corporate clients in Switzerland. Through its global activities, UBS plays a central role in the ecosystem of the Swiss financial center, whose strength, according to a study by Oliver Wyman ("The Swiss Banking Sector – Role and Relevance for Switzerland", 10 April 2025), is based on cooperation and network effects between large and smaller financial service providers. UBS strives to continue promoting specialization and thus the success of the financial center and the economy through its diverse range of services. The regulatory framework should continue to allow Switzerland to reap these benefits from UBS's global business model. Excessive regulatory costs would jeopardize UBS's business model and thus its stability.

Figure 1 – Size and breakdown of balance sheet (UBS and Credit Suisse combined) in CHF[1]



1 Based on the financial information reported by UBS and Credit Suisse in accordance with their respective accounting standards; pro forma calculation of the combined figures for 2007; 3Q2025 values converted using the closing CHF-USD exchange rate from the quarterly report; breakdown in % excluding Corporate Center (2007) items.

Figure 2 – Revenue mix by business area compared to international systemically important banks (G-SIBs)



1 Underlying revenue for FY25, excluding NCL and group elements; **2** Average revenue of competitors in 2020-2023 using disclosed reporting segments, excluding trust banks.