

Thailand Market Strategy

Private investment and inventories dragged 4Q24 TH GDP

- The NESDC reported lower-than-expected 4Q24 GDP growth of only 0.4% q-q and 3.2% y-y because of a lower change in inventories.
- Public segments, private consumption, and exports continued to experience strong growth, while private investment was still negative.
- Moderate growth and more balanced Thai GDP expected in 2025. Key risks are global trade policy changes.

Lower-than-expected 4Q24 Thai GDP

The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) reported that Thai GDP grew by only 0.4% q-q and 3.2% y-y in 4Q24, missing the street's expectation of +0.7% q-q and +3.8% y-y. Each economic engine grew above 3.2% y-y, but they were pressured by a lower change in inventories. As a result, the Thai economy grew by 2.5% y-y in 2024, lower than the market's forecast of +2.7% y-y.

Public segments and exports continued to experience strong growth

We still have a positive view on public segments, both spending and investment, which jumped 5.4% y-y and 39.4% y-y in 4Q24, thanks to the acceleration of the budget disbursement rate of 36.7% of the total budget in the quarter; higher than 19.9% in 3Q24 and 30.7% in 4Q23. Moreover, export segments are continuing to show strong growth. Goods exports increased by 8.9% y-y thanks to the global economy, which remains resilient. Meanwhile, exports of services jumped by 22.9% y-y, thanks to more tourist arrivals numbering 9.46 million (+17% y-y) in the quarter.

Consumption remains resilient; private investment still dragging

For the private sector, consumption still had resilient growth of 3.4% y-y in 4Q24, supported by the first phase of the THB10,000 cash handout, released in late 3Q24. In addition, consumer confidence inched up to 57.9 after declining in 2Q-3Q24. However, private investment is the only engine that remained in negative territory for three consecutive quarters at -2.1% y-y, in line with the muted growth in the property and automotive sectors. Business confidence was slightly up at 48.4 from its bottom in 3Q24, implying a possible turnaround in 2025, supported by record-high investment promotion applications in 2024.

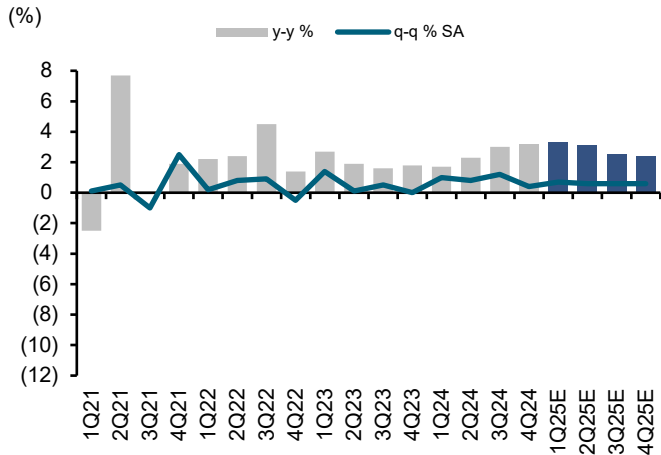
Moderate growth with more balanced GDP in 2025

For 2025, the NESDC maintains its GDP growth projections of 2.3-3.3% y-y. However, there is some uncertainty over global trade policy changes, which could indirectly affect Thai exports. The upcoming Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting will be focused on the economic outlook and whether it will hold or cut the policy rate from the current 2.25%. For the direction of the SET index, we believe that the 4Q24 earnings results will play a key role. If earnings do not provide a significant downside to 2025E EPS, we expect the SET index to have a limited downside, with a range of c1,200–1,250, trading at 2025 PER and P/BV of 12.6-13.1x and c1.2x, respectively.

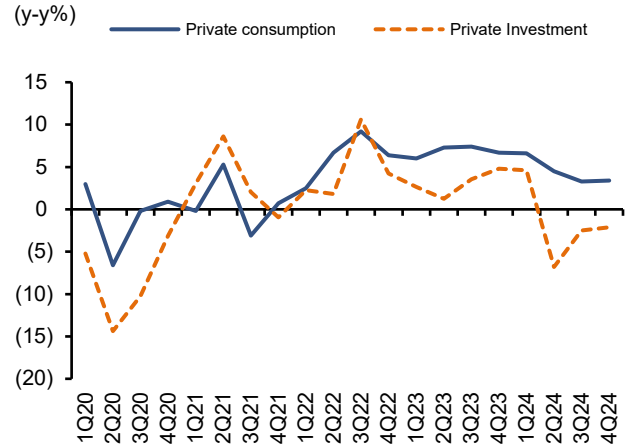


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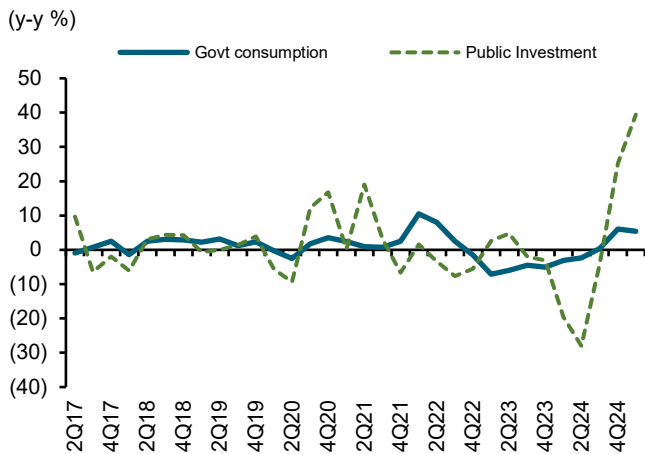
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Exhibit 1: Slower-than-expected q-q and y-y growth for TH 4Q24 GDP

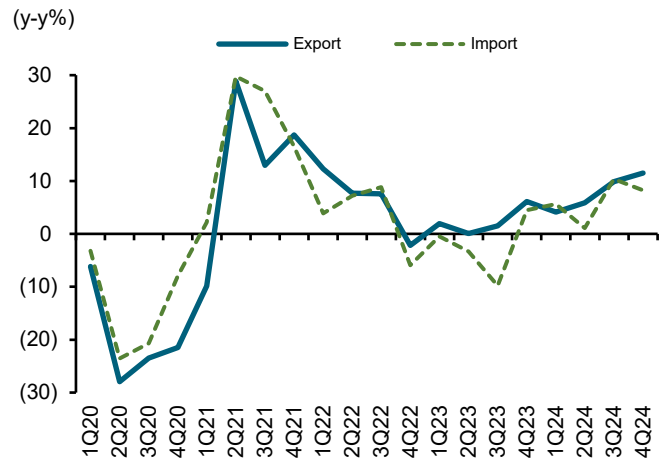
Source: NESDC

Exhibit 2: Private consumption still resilient while investment remained negative

Source: NESDC

Exhibit 3: Public spending decelerated while investment jumped from low base last year

Source: NESDC

Exhibit 4: Exports of both goods and services still solid

Source: NESDC

Exhibit 5: NESDC and BoT economic projections

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	NESDC	Bank of Thailand
	(y-y%)	(y-y%)	(y-y%)	(y-y%)	(y-y%)	(y-y%)	2025E	2025E
							(y-y%)	(y-y%)
Real GDP growth	2.3	(6.4)	1.5	2.6	1.9	2.5	2.3-3.3	2.9
Private consumption	4.0	(0.8)	0.6	6.3	7.1	4.4	3.3	2.4
Private investment	2.7	(8.1)	3.0	5.1	3.2	(1.6)	3.2	2.2
Public consumption	1.7	1.4	3.7	(0.0)	(4.6)	2.5	1.3	1.5
Public investment	0.1	5.1	3.4	(4.9)	(4.6)	4.8	4.7	5.1
Export value growth (USD b)	(3.3)	(6.5)	19.2	5.5	(1.7)	5.8	3.5	2.7
Headline inflation	0.7	(0.8)	1.2	6.1	1.2	0.4	0.5-1.5	1.1
Current account to GDP (%)	7.0	4.2	(2.0)	(3.2)	1.3	2.3	2.5	-
Number of tourist arrivals (m)	39.9	0.0	0.4	11.2	28.1	35.5	38	39.5

Sources: NESDC and BoT

Disclaimer for ESG scoring

ESG score	Methodology	Rating																			
The Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI) By S&P Global	The DJSI World applies a transparent, rules-based component selection process based on the companies' Total Sustainability Scores resulting from the annual S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA). Only the top-ranked companies within each industry are selected for inclusion.	Be a member and invited to the annual S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA) for DJSI. Companies with an S&P Global ESG Score of less than 45% of the S&P Global ESG Score of the highest scoring company are disqualified. The constituents of the DJSI indices are selected from the Eligible Universe.																			
SET ESG Ratings List (SETESG) by The Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET)	SET ESG quantifies responsibility in Environmental and Social issues by managing business with transparency in Governance, updated annually. Candidates must pass the preemptive criteria, with two crucial conditions: 1) no irregular trading of the board members and executives; and 2) free float of >150 shareholders, and combined holding must be >15% of paid-up capital. Some key disqualifying criteria include: 1) CG score of below 70%; 2) independent directors and free float violation; 3) executives' wrongdoing related to CG, social & environmental impacts; 4) equity in negative territory; and 5) earnings in red for > 3 years in the last 5 years.	To be eligible for SETESG inclusion , verified data must be scored at a minimum of 50% for each indicator, unless the company is a part of DJSI during the assessment year. The scoring will be fairly weighted against the nature of the relevant industry and materiality. SETESG Index is extended from the SET ESG Ratings companies whose 1) market capitalization > THB5b (~USD150b); 2) free float >20%; and 3) liquidity >0.5% of paid-up capital for at least 9 out of 12 months. The SETTHSI Index is a market capitalisation-weighted index, cap 5% quarterly weight at maximum, and no cap for number of stocks.																			
CG Score by Thai Institute of Directors Association (Thai IOD)	An indicator of CG strength in sustainable development, measured annually by the Thai IOD, with support from the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET). The results are from the perspective of a third party, not an evaluation of operations.	Scores are rated in six categories: 5 for Excellent (90-100), 4 for Very Good (80-89), 3 for Good (70-79), 2 for Fair (60-69), 1 for Pass (60-69), and not rated for scores below 50. Weightings include: 1) the rights; 2) and equitable treatment of shareholders (weight 25% combined); 3) the role of stakeholders (25%); 4) disclosure & transparency (15%); and 5) board responsibilities (35%).																			
AGM level By Thai Investors Association (TIA) with support from the SEC	It quantifies the extent to which shareholders' rights and equitable treatment are incorporated into business operations and information is transparent and sufficiently disclosed. All form important elements of two out of five the CG components to be evaluated annually. The assessment criteria cover AGM procedures before the meeting (45%), at the meeting date (45%), and after the meeting (10%). <i>(The first assesses 1) advance circulation of sufficient information for voting; and 2) facilitating how voting rights can be exercised. The second assesses 1) the ease of attending meetings; 2) transparency and verifiability; and 3) openness for Q&A. The third involves the meeting minutes that should contain discussion issues, resolutions and voting results.)</i>	The scores are classified into four categories: 5 for Excellent (100), 4 for Very Good (90-99), 3 for Fair (80-89), and not rated for scores below 79.																			
Thai CAC By Thai Private Sector Collective Action Against Corruption (CAC)	The core elements of the Checklist include corruption risk assessment, establishment of key controls, and the monitoring and developing of policies. The Certification is good for three years. <i>(Companies deciding to become a CAC certified member start by submitting a Declaration of Intent to kick off an 18-month deadline to submit the CAC Checklist for Certification, including risk assessment, in place of policy and control, training of managers and employees, establishment of whistleblowing channels, and communication of policies to all stakeholders.)</i>	The document will be reviewed by a committee of nine professionals. A passed Checklist will move for granting certification by the CAC Council approvals whose members are twelve highly respected individuals in professionalism and ethical achievements.																			
Morningstar Sustainalytics	The Sustainalytics' ESG risk rating provides an overall company score based on an assessment of how much of a company's exposure to ESG risk is unmanaged. <i>Sources to be reviewed include corporate publications and regulatory filings, news and other media, NGO reports/websites, multi-sector information, company feedback, ESG controversies, issuer feedback on draft ESG reports, and quality & peer reviews.</i>	A company's ESG risk rating score is the sum of unmanaged risk. The more risk is unmanaged, the higher ESG risk is scored. <table><tr><th>NEGL</th><th>Low</th><th>Medium</th><th>High</th><th>Severe</th></tr><tr><td>0-10</td><td>10-20</td><td>20-30</td><td>30-40</td><td>40+</td></tr></table>	NEGL	Low	Medium	High	Severe	0-10	10-20	20-30	30-40	40+									
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ESG Book	The ESG score identifies sustainable companies that are better positioned to outperform over the long term. The methodology considers the principle of financial materiality including information that significantly helps explain future risk-adjusted performance. Materiality is applied by over-weighting features with higher materiality and rebalancing these weights on a rolling quarterly basis.	The total ESG score is calculated as a weighted sum of the features scores using materiality-based weights. The score is scaled between 0 and 100 with higher scores indicating better performance.																			
MSCI	MSCI ESG ratings aim to measure a company's management of financially relevant ESG risks and opportunities. It uses a rules-based methodology to identify industry leaders and laggards according to their exposure to ESG risks and how well they manage those risks relative to peers. <table><tr><td>AAA</td><td>8.571-10.000</td><td rowspan="3">Leader:</td><td rowspan="3">leading its industry in managing the most significant ESG risks and opportunities</td></tr><tr><td>AA</td><td>7.143-8.570</td></tr><tr><td>A</td><td>5.714-7.142</td></tr><tr><td>BBB</td><td>4.286-5.713</td><td rowspan="3">Average:</td><td rowspan="3">a mixed or unexceptional track record of managing the most significant ESG risks and opportunities relative to industry peers</td></tr><tr><td>BB</td><td>2.857-4.285</td></tr><tr><td>B</td><td>1.429-2.856</td></tr><tr><td>CCC</td><td>0.000-1.428</td><td>Laggard:</td><td>lagging its industry based on its high exposure and failure to manage significant ESG risks</td></tr></table>	AAA	8.571-10.000	Leader:	leading its industry in managing the most significant ESG risks and opportunities	AA	7.143-8.570	A	5.714-7.142	BBB	4.286-5.713	Average:	a mixed or unexceptional track record of managing the most significant ESG risks and opportunities relative to industry peers	BB	2.857-4.285	B	1.429-2.856	CCC	0.000-1.428	Laggard:	lagging its industry based on its high exposure and failure to manage significant ESG risks
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Moody's ESG solutions	Moody's assesses the degree to which companies take into account ESG objectives in the definition and implementation of their strategy policies. It believes that a company integrating ESG factors into its business model and relatively outperforming its peers is better positioned to mitigate risks and create sustainable value for shareholders over the medium to long term.																				
Refinitiv ESG rating	Designed to transparently and objectively measure a company's relative ESG performance, commitment and effectiveness across 10 main themes, based on publicly available and auditable data. The score ranges from 0 to 100 on relative ESG performance and insufficient degree of transparency in reporting material ESG data publicly. <i>(Score ratings are 0 to 25 = poor; >25 to 50 = satisfactory; >50 to 75 = good; and >75 to 100 = excellent.)</i>																				
S&P Global	The S&P Global ESG Score is a relative score measuring a company's performance on and management of ESG risks, opportunities, and impacts compared to its peers within the same industry classification. The score ranges from 0 to 100.																				
Bloomberg	ESG Score	Bloomberg score evaluating the company's aggregated Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance. The score is based on Bloomberg's view of ESG financial materiality. The score is a weighted generalized mean (power mean) of Pillar Scores, where the weights are determined by the pillar priority ranking. Values range from 0 to 10; 10 is the best.																			
Bloomberg	ESG Disclosure Score	Disclosure of a company's ESG used for Bloomberg ESG score. The score ranges from 0 for none to 100 for disclosure of every data point, measuring the amount of ESG data reported publicly, and not the performance on any data point.																			

[Rating](#) regarding the sustainable development of Thai listed companies, both on the SET and MAI, are publicly available on the website of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Thailand (SEC). Currently, ratings available are 1) "**CG Score**"; 2) "**AGM Level**"; 3) "**Thai CAC**"; and 4) **THSI**. The ratings are updated on an annual basis. FSSIA does not confirm nor certify the accuracy of such ratings.

Source: FSSIA's compilation

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All share prices are as at market close, unless otherwise stated.

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Stock ratings are based on absolute upside or downside, which we define as $(\text{target price}^* - \text{current price}) / \text{current price}$.

BUY (B). The upside is 10% or more.

HOLD (H). The upside or downside is less than 10%.

REDUCE (R). The downside is 10% or more.

Unless otherwise specified, these recommendations are set with a 12-month horizon. Thus, it is possible that future price volatility may cause a temporary mismatch between upside/downside for a stock based on market price and the formal recommendation.

* In most cases, the target price will equal the analyst's assessment of the current fair value of the stock. However, if the analyst doesn't think the market will reassess the stock over the specified time horizon due to a lack of events or catalysts, then the target price may differ from fair value. In most cases, therefore, our recommendation is an assessment of the mismatch between current market price and our assessment of current fair value.

Industry Recommendations

Overweight. The analyst expects the fundamental conditions of the sector to be positive over the next 12 months.

Neutral. The analyst expects the fundamental conditions of the sector to be maintained over the next 12 months.

Underweight. The analyst expects the fundamental conditions of the sector to be negative over the next 12 months.

Country (Strategy) Recommendations

Overweight (O). Over the next 12 months, the analyst expects the market to score positively on two or more of the criteria used to determine market recommendations: index returns relative to the regional benchmark, index sharpe ratio relative to the regional benchmark and index returns relative to the market cost of equity.

Neutral (N). Over the next 12 months, the analyst expects the market to score positively on one of the criteria used to determine market recommendations: index returns relative to the regional benchmark, index sharpe ratio relative to the regional benchmark and index returns relative to the market cost of equity.

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