

# First Sentier Global Listed Infrastructure Fund

Quarterly Investment Report

31 December 2023

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## Portfolio Overview

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### Investment objective and strategy

The Fund aims to achieve total investment return consistent with income and long term capital growth, and invests all or substantially all of its assets in the First Sentier Global Listed Infrastructure Fund ("Underlying Sub-Fund"), a subfund of the England and Wales domiciled umbrella fund First Sentier Investors ICVC.

The Underlying Sub-Fund invests in a diversified portfolio of securities issued by companies in the infrastructure sector that are listed, traded or dealt in on regulated markets worldwide. The infrastructure sector includes, but is not limited to, utilities (e.g. water and electricity), highways and railways, airports, marine ports and oil and gas storage and transportation.

#### **Available Share Classes**

Share class	Inception date	NAV price	Distribution frequency#	ISIN code
Class A (Dist)	03 Mar 2008	S\$1.0650	Semi-annually	SG9999005300

#### **Fund Information**

Fund Size (S\$m)	16.2
Benchmark	FTSE Global Core Infrastructure 50/50 Index*
Number Of Holdings	41

<sup>\*</sup>The benchmark displayed is UBS Global Infrastructure & Utilities 50-50 Index until 31 March 2015 and FTSE Global Core Infrastructure 50/50 Index from 1 April 2015 onwards.

## **Performance**

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### Annualised performance in SGD (%)

	1yr	3yrs	5yrs	10yrs	Since incept.
Class A (SGD - H Dist) (Ex initial charges)	-0.2	2.5	4.5	5.3	3.8
Class A (SGD - H Dist) (Inc initial charges)	-5.2	8.0	3.4	4.7	3.4
Benchmark*	1.4	4.5	6.2	7.2	4.7

### Cumulative performance in SGD (%)

	3mths	1yr	3yrs	5yrs	Since incept.
Class A (SGD - H Dist) (Ex initial charges)	7.3	-0.2	7.7	24.4	79.2
Class A (SGD - H Dist) (Inc initial charges)	2.0	-5.2	2.3	18.2	70.2
Benchmark*	7.4	1.4	14.1	34.9	106.1

### Calendar Year Performance (% in SGD) to 31 December 2023



Source: Lipper, First Sentier Investors. Single pricing basis with net income reinvested. Except for the benchmark index, performance stated for relevant indices are quoted in the respective local currency unless otherwise specified. Investment involves risks, past performance is not a guide to future performance.

## Commentary

31 December 2023

#### **Market Review**

A growing consensus that interest rate cuts were likely in 2024 drove a strong quarter for Global Listed Infrastructure, with gains for every infrastructure sector and region. The Fund returned +6.7% after fees, compared with a +6.1% return from its benchmark index. Global equities ended the quarter +6.7% higher.

#### **Performance Review**

Mobile towers led the asset class higher, aided by falling bond yields and activist intervention for Crown Castle. North American freight railroads were supported by improving productivity metrics and indications of volume recovery, following a testing 2023. Water / waste rose on an improving regulatory outlook for UK water utilities, and robust earnings numbers from the US waste management sector. Toll roads performed well on solid traffic numbers and hopes of a soft landing for the global economy.

US infrastructure stocks performed well, reflecting robust gains for the region's tower, railroad and utility stocks. Infrastructure stocks in Japan lagged, having delivered strong returns earlier in the year on hopes of corporate reform and easing deflation.

#### **Fund Activity**

The Fund initiated a position in Eversource Energy, a regulated transmission and distribution-focused US utility with a healthy forecast Earnings Per Share growth rate of between 5% and 7% through to 2027. Uncertainty relating to the sale of its 50% stake in an offshore wind project off the south coast of Massachusetts, and concerns for higher interest rates, have weighed on its share price in recent months. We believe the stock is now trading at a substantial discount to intrinsic value.

A position in large-cap US waste management company Republic Services was divested during the quarter. Strong share price gains since the position was initiated in early 2021 reduced mispricing and moved the stock to a lower ranking within our investment process.

#### Outlook

The Fund invests in a range of listed infrastructure assets including toll roads, airports, railroads, utilities and renewables, energy midstream, wireless towers and data centres. These sectors share common characteristics, like barriers to entry and pricing power, which can provide investors with inflation-protected income and strong capital growth over the medium-term.

Toll roads remain the portfolio's largest sector overweight. These companies have benefited from a shift towards cars and away from public transport since the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, inflation-linked toll increases have had little impact on demand. Strong operating leverage (ie largely fixed costs as sales increase) has proved supportive of earnings growth. From here, we believe that improvements made to toll road networks in recent years provide scope for further growth in traffic volumes.

A substantial portion of the portfolio consists of utilities / renewables. Following a challenging 2023, these stocks face a more constructive outlook for 2024. Balance sheets are in better shape, customer bill pressures are declining and we could see a re-emergence of M&A activity. Capital expenditure growth should accelerate, reflecting the need for increased resiliency spend and higher electricity usage growth from data centres, industrial onshoring and electric vehicles. However, this growth is also likely to require increased equity issuance.

The portfolio remains underweight energy midstream. Supportive oil and natural gas prices, robust LNG export levels and a disciplined approach to capital expenditure saw the sector generate strong free cash flow in 2023. This may allow energy midstream companies to increase dividend payments and carry out share buybacks, along with some M&A activity, in 2024. However, following strong share price gains in recent years, we believe that greater mispricing can be found elsewhere within our opportunity set.

## Portfolio Allocation and Stock Holdings

31 December 2023

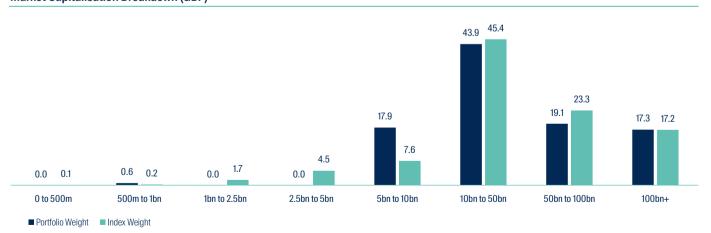
#### Ten Largest Holdings as at 31 December 2023

Stock Name	Geography	Sector	Portfolio Weight (%)	Index Weight (%)
Transurban	Australia	Highways & Railtracks	6.8	4.5
NextEra Energy, Inc.	USA	Electric Utilities	5.6	4.3
Duke Energy Corporation	USA	Electric Utilities	4.9	2.9
American Tower Corporation	USA	Telecom Tower REITs	4.2	3.6
Southern Company	USA	Electric Utilities	4.1	2.9
Entergy Corporation	USA	Electric Utilities	3.5	0.8
Alliant Energy Corp	USA	Electric Utilities	3.5	0.5
Union Pacific Corporation	USA	Rail Transportation	3.5	2.4
Cheniere Energy, Inc.	USA	Oil & Gas Storage & Transportation	3.3	1.5
Xcel Energy Inc.	USA	Electric Utilities	3.3	1.3

#### Sector Breakdown Geographic Breakdown ■ Electric Utilities 37.1% (30.3%\*) ■ USA 60.2% (52.2%\*) Highways & Railtracks 17.0% (7.8%\*) Australia 9.8% (5.6%\*) ■ Rail Transportation 8.9% (9.0%\*) Mexico 5.9% (2.9%\*) Oil & Gas Storage & Transportation 7.9% (11.7%\*) China 4.8% (2.5%\*) ■ Airport Services 7.3% (9.5%\*) ■ UK 3.4% (3.1%\*) Telecom Tower REITs 7.0% (6.4%\*) France 3.2% (0.9%\*) Gas Utilities 4.6% (4.1%\*) Canada 2.9% (9.1%\*) ■ Multi-Utilities 4.1% (12.3%\*) ■ Brazil 2.6% (3.0%\*) ■ Water Utilities 2.9% (2.9%\*) Switzerland 2.0% (0.6%\*) Construction & Engineering 1.5% (0.0%\*) Other 4.2% (20.1%\*) Other 0.7% (5.9%\*) Cash 1.0% (0.0%\*) Cash 1.0% (0.0%\*) \*Index Weight \*Index Weight

Sector and Country classifications provided by Factset and First Sentier Investors. The Fund may hold multiple equity securities in the same company, which have been combined to provide the Fund's total position in that company. Index weights, if any, typically include only the main domestic-listed security. The above Fund weightings may or may not include reference to multiple securities.

#### Market Capitalisation Breakdown (GBP)



Source: First Sentier Investors as at 31 December 2023. The Fund may hold multiple equity securities in the same company, which have been combined to provide the Fund's total position in that company. Index weights, if any, typically include only the main domestic-listed security. The above Fund weightings may or may not include reference to multiple securities. Allocation percentage is rounded to the nearest one decimal place and the total allocation percentage may not add up to 100%. Past performance is not indicative of future performance. Reference to specific securities (if any) is included for the purpose of illustration only and should not be construed as a recommendation to buy or sell the same. All securities mentioned herein may or may not form part of the holdings of First Sentier Investors' portfolios at a certain point in time, and the holdings may change over time.

### Stock Contribution

31 December 2023

#### Top 5 contributors to absolute performance

#### 3 months to 31 December 2023

Stock Name	Country	Sector	Value added (bps*)
American Tower Corporation	USA	Telecom Tower REITs	114
Transurban	Australia	Highways & Railtracks	74
Grupo Aeroportuario del Sureste SAB de CV Class B	Mexico	Airport Services	52
Union Pacific Corporation	USA	Rail Transportation	51
Grupo Aeroportuario del Pacifico SAB de CV Class B	Mexico	Airport Services	39

#### 12 months to 31 December 2023

Stock Name	Country	Sector	Value added (bps*)
Aena SME SA	Spain	Airport Services	104
CCR S.A.	Brazil	Highways & Railtracks	66
Grupo Aeroportuario del Sureste SAB de CV Class B	Mexico	Airport Services	60
Promotora y Operadora de Infraestructura SA	Mexico	Highways & Railtracks	48
Flughafen Zurich AG	Switzerland	Airport Services	46

#### Bottom 5 contributors to absolute performance

#### 3 months to 31 December 2023

Stock Name	Country	Sector	Value added (bps*)
Beijing Capital International Airport Co., Ltd. Class H	China	Airport Services	-33
ENN Energy Holdings Limited	China	Gas Utilities	-32
Guangdong Investment Limited	China	Water Utilities	-9
Jiangsu Expressway Co. Ltd. Class H	China	Highways & Railtracks	-7
Targa Resources Corp.	USA	Oil & Gas Storage & Transportation	-7

#### 12 months to 31 December 2023

			Value added
Stock Name	Country	Sector	(bps*)
ENN Energy Holdings Limited	China	Gas Utilities	-140
Crown Castle International Corp	USA	Telecom Tower REITs	-138
NextEra Energy, Inc.	USA	Electric Utilities	-133
Dominion Energy Inc	USA	Multi-Utilities	-87
Beijing Capital International Airport Co., Ltd. Class H	China	Airport Services	-69

Stock Contributions show the impact of the individual stock's performance to the total fund performance. These stock contributions show the top 5 and bottom 5 contributors to the fund and are not representative of the performance of the fund as a whole.

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This stock information does not constitute any offer or inducement to enter into investment activity.

Contributions are calculated at the investee company level before the deduction of any fees incurred at fund level (e.g. the management fee and other fund expenses) but after the deduction of transactional costs.

Stocks held/listed in non-index countries have economic activity > 50% from developing economies.

\* A basis point is a unit of measure used in finance to describe the percentage change in value or rate of a financial instrument. One basis point is equivalent to 0.01% (1/100th of a percent) or 0.0001 in decimal form.

Data source: This information is calculated by First Sentier Investors.