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S&P Global Market Intelligence's 2026 Private Equity Survey Shows Fundraising Confidence Rising as Managers Pivot to Operational Value

GPs optimistic about 2026 capital raising despite valuation pressures, with 71% prioritizing operational improvements over financial engineering

NEW YORK, April 13, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- S&P Global Market Intelligence today released its 2026 Private Equity and Venture Capital Outlook, revealing that private equity fund managers are doubling down on value creation through operational improvements as they navigate economic uncertainty.

The report shows that while the macroeconomic outlook remains cautious, most GPs expect deal volumes to hold steady or improve in 2026, and fundraising conditions are brightening for many managers.

"The private equity industry is at an inflection point," said**Kevin Zacharuk, Head of Private Equity, Data & Research at S&P Global Market Intelligence**. "GPs are shifting their approach to value creation, with operational improvements now ranking as the top priority. However, our research reveals that many firms are constrained by fragmented data and limited visibility into the metrics that matter most for driving portfolio company performance."

Key findings include:

- **Operational focus intensifies:** 60% of General Partners (GPs) agree that higher capital costs are forcing greater focus on portfolio company operational performance, with operational improvements (72%) ranking as the top value creation lever.
- **Fundraising optimism:** 59% of GPs are either highly (21%) or cautiously (38%) optimistic about achieving their 2026 fundraising targets, though shifting investor priorities (47%) remain the top challenge.
- **Deal activity stabilizing:** 38% of GPs expect deal volumes to increase in 2026, while 40% expect volumes to remain steady. However, only 20% expect improved valuations, with 28% anticipating deterioration.
- **Macroeconomic caution:** Nearly half of GPs (48%) expect GDP growth to remain unchanged, while close to the same portion (47%) anticipate worsening inflation. GPs predicting improved capital availability (39%) slightly outnumber those expecting tightening conditions.
- **Investment strategy:** Traditional buyouts remain the core strategy (45%), followed by growth equity (38%) and venture capital (26%).
- **Private credit concerns:** 53% of respondents cite deteriorating credit quality and rising defaults as the greatest risk to private credit markets in 2026.
- **Data quality gaps:** GPs expressed significant dissatisfaction with the quality and availability of non-public operational metrics (37% dissatisfied), detailed debt data (38%), and third-party consensus estimates (39%). Additionally, 60% are dissatisfied with Limited Partner (LP) allocation data, and fragmented or unstructured data was cited as a key barrier.
- **Limited AI adoption:** AI integration remains in early stages, with due diligence showing the highest adoption (31% somewhat or fully integrated). However, majorities rated AI as ineffective for deal sourcing (64%) and portfolio monitoring (75%). Barriers include lack of expertise (49%), data privacy concerns (43%), and model accuracy concerns (38%).

- **Mid-tier consolidation expected:** Nearly half of GPs (46%) anticipate a "shake-out" of mid-tier peers in 2026, as managers unable to generate distributions struggle to raise capital.

The S&P Global Market Intelligence Private Equity and Venture Capital Outlook surveyed global private equity, venture capital, and limited partner respondents in February 2026, covering questions on deal activity, fundraising, technology adoption, value creation strategies, and portfolio operations.

To request a copy of the 2026 Private Equity and Venture Capital Outlook, please contactpress.mi@spglobal.com.

About S&P Global Market Intelligence

At S&P Global Market Intelligence, we understand the importance of accurate, deep and insightful information. Our team of experts delivers unrivaled insights and leading data and technology solutions, partnering with customers to expand their perspective, operate with confidence, and make decisions with conviction.

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Contacts:

Florence Bogitsh
S&P Global Market Intelligence
+1 646 460-7204
florence.bogitsh@spglobal.com
press.mi@spglobal.com

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