

Summary of the Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions for 2015:Q3¹

ASSETS FALL ALMOST FIVE PERCENT DURING THIRD QUARTER OF 2015

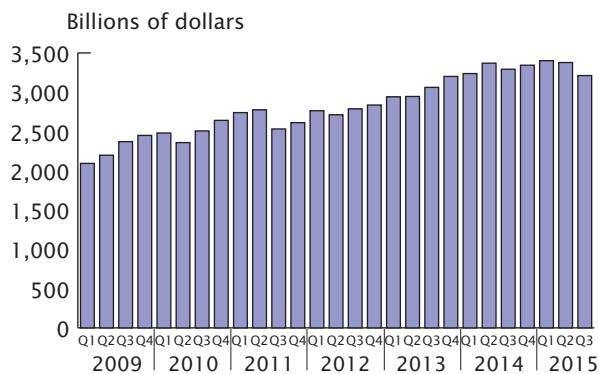
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ASSETS DIP ON NEGATIVE EARNINGS

For the 100 largest public-employee pension systems in the country, cash and security holdings totaled \$3,211.8 billion in the third quarter of 2015, dropping from \$3,377.7 billion in the second quarter of 2015, a decrease of 4.9 percent.² Compared to the same quarter in 2014, assets for these major public pension systems decreased 2.5 percent from \$3,292.6 billion (see Figure 1). This decline in assets is due to negative earnings, which fell from a gain of \$32.6 billion in the second quarter of 2015 to a loss of \$145.9 billion in the third quarter.

Figure 1.
Total Holdings and Investments at End of Quarter at Market Value



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions.

The asset categories highlighted in the summary report reflect the major categories published in the Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions. Please see the complete data sets on the Web site for further detail.

CORPORATE STOCKS FALL ALMOST FIVE PERCENT

Corporate stocks had a quarter-to-quarter decrease of 4.9 percent, from \$1,223.5 billion to \$1,163.9 billion during the third quarter of 2015. Corporate stocks experienced a year-to-year increase of 0.5 percent from \$1,158.3 billion in the third quarter of 2014. Corporate stocks comprised more than a third (36.2 percent) of the total cash and security holdings of major public pension systems for the current quarter. See Figure 2.

CORPORATE BONDS INCREASE SLIGHTLY

Corporate bonds had a quarter-to-quarter increase of 1.0 percent from \$418.1 billion to \$422.4 billion in the third quarter of 2015. Corporate bonds year-to-year increased 11.9 percent from \$377.4 billion in the third quarter of 2014. Corporate bonds comprised about an eighth (13.2 percent) of the total cash and security holdings of major public pension systems for the current quarter. See Figure 2.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITIES FALL ALMOST TEN PERCENT

International securities had a quarter-to-quarter decrease of 9.3 percent, from \$624.8 billion to \$566.8 billion in the third quarter of 2015. International securities

¹ This summary is based on the Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions, which consists of a panel of the 100 largest state and local government pension systems, as determined by their total cash and security holdings reported in the 2012 Census of Governments. These 100 systems comprised 88.4 percent of financial activity among such entities, based on the 2012 Census of Governments. Each of the 100 systems represents itself only. These data are not subject to sampling error, but are subject to various nonsampling errors, such as errors of nonresponse and respondent error.

² For percentage changes, all values are calculated based on the values presented in the publication tables and not on the rounded numbers presented in the summary report.

For further information on public pensions, please visit our Web site at <www.census.gov/govs/qpr/> or contact Economy-Wide Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, at **1-800-242-2184** or by e-mail at <ewd.outreach@census.gov>.



year-to-year decreased 9.1 percent from \$623.6 billion in the third quarter of 2014. International securities comprised less than a fifth (17.6 percent) of total cash and security holdings of major public pension systems for the current quarter. See Figure 3.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SECURITIES FALL ALMOST FIVE PERCENT

Federal government securities had a quarter-to-quarter decrease of 6.1 percent from \$258.9 billion to \$243.0 billion in the third quarter of 2015. Federal government securities year-to-year decreased 19.9 percent, from \$303.4 billion in the third quarter of 2014. Federal government securities comprised less than a tenth (7.6 percent) of the total cash and security holdings of major public pension systems for the current quarter. See Figure 3.

GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION INCREASE OFFSETS EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION DECREASE

Government contributions had a quarter-to-quarter increase of 15.0 percent, from \$26.1 billion to \$30.0 billion during the third quarter of 2015, and a year-to-year increase of 18.1 percent, from \$25.4 billion in the third quarter of 2014. Employee contributions had a quarter-to-quarter decrease of 19.1 percent, from \$11.4 billion to \$9.2 billion in the third quarter of 2015, and a year-to-year decrease of 8.5 percent, from \$10.0 billion in the third quarter of 2014. Government contributions to employee contributions had a 3.3 to 1 ratio this quarter, as government contributions comprised 76.5 percent of total contributions. Total benefit payments totaled \$65.2 billion, down 5.0 percent from the \$68.6 billion level last quarter.

Figure 2.
Corporate Stocks¹ and Corporate Bonds² at End of Quarter at Market Value

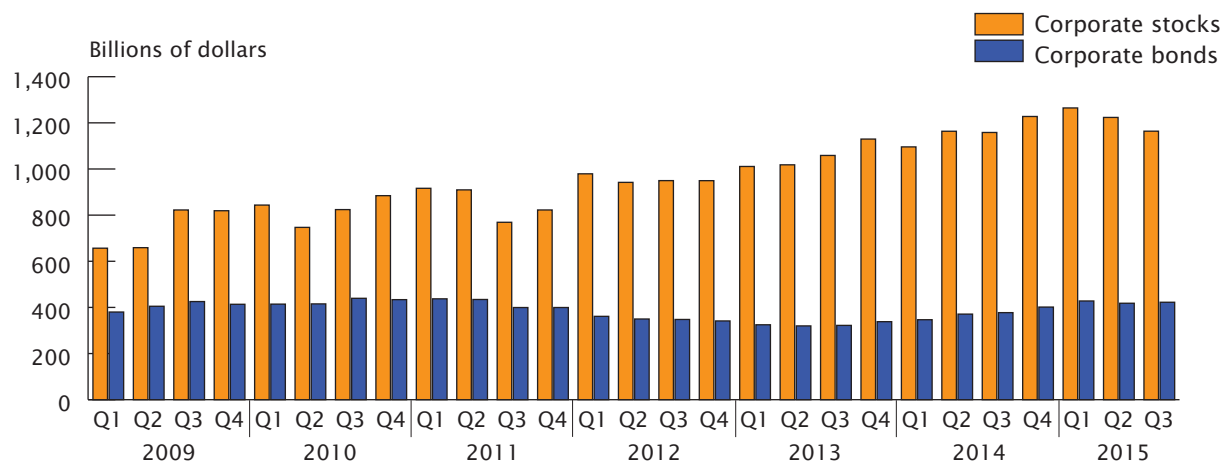
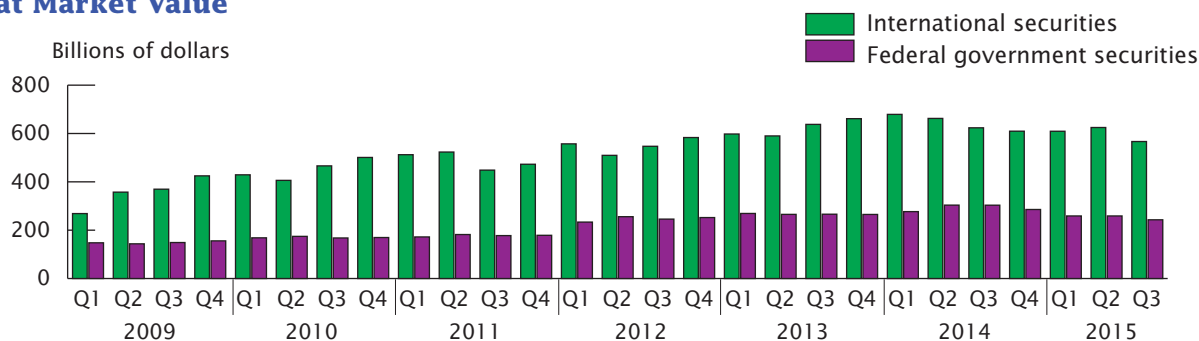


Figure 3.
International Securities and Federal Government Securities² at End of Quarter at Market Value



¹ Effective with the first quarter of 2012, private equity, venture capital, and leveraged buy-outs are now classified under *corporate stocks* instead of *other securities*. As such, for these asset categories, any data comparisons between the quarters prior to 2012 and quarters thereafter should be exercised with caution.

² Effective with the first quarter of 2012, federally sponsored agency securities are now classified under *federal government securities* instead of *corporate bonds*. As such, for these asset categories, any data comparisons between the quarters prior to 2012 and quarters thereafter should be exercised with caution.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quarterly Survey of Public Pensions.