

THE ANTIN IP ASSOCIATE PROFESSORSHIP IN INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCE

Private infrastructure and sustainability: The roadmap between ESG and value creation in face of the new backdrop

13 November 2025
3:00 pm – 5:30pm CET

Welcome speech Angelika Schöchlin, Managing Partner

Introduction:

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am Dr. Angelika Schöchlin, Managing Partner at Antin Infrastructure Partners. I joined the firm in 2010, and I am a member of the Executive Committee and Investment Committee. I also serve as the firm's global sponsor for all transactions falling under the transport and social infrastructure sectors. It's my pleasure to welcome you today to explore the roadmap between ESG and value creation in the current macroeconomic environment.

Macroeconomic environment:

Since we last met last year, certain macroeconomic trends such as persistent inflation and higher interest rates have remained, while geopolitical tensions and concerns over energy security have only increased. Furthermore, the regulatory environment, particularly in the United States, has dramatically shifted under the Trump administration. So, in one sense, we are operating in the face of a new backdrop – as the title of this webinar indicates. In another sense, infrastructure investing, the very nature of which is long-term, evolved throughout a constantly changing backdrop. New backdrops are to be expected, and Antin has spent the last 18 years navigating these macroeconomic changes and challenges using a downside-protected approach to risk: the 'Antin Infrastructure Test'. Since our inception, this test has served as our guiding compass, defining the essential characteristics a business must exhibit to qualify as infrastructure. The infrastructure test is built upon five pillars that a business must exhibit:

1. Provide an "essential" service to the community and economy,
2. Exhibit high barriers to entry,
3. Have stable and predictable cash flows,
4. Have largely inflation-linked cash flows, and;

5. Display robust downside protection largely insulated from the business cycle.

By adhering to this set of criteria, we ensure that our investments are directed towards businesses that are well-prepared to operate even in an adverse economic environment characterized by an evolving global landscape. Another point to underscore is that periods of uncertainty – like the one we are currently experiencing – oftentimes provide unique investment opportunities.

Sustainability:

Today we are here to focus on sustainability and value creation. While news headlines may focus on the recent ‘pushback’ by the current US administration, most private investors consider that sustainability just makes good business sense, regardless of the politics surrounding it. Regulatory policies enabling specific subsectors may be repealed and subsidies eliminated; however, many now feel that most of these subsectors are ready to stand on their own feet and pass this stress test. Renewables and electric renewables may be in the regulatory crosshairs at the moment, but sustainability and how it relates to value creation is a much more encompassing topic.

At Antin, we view sustainability as a key driver of value creation. By systematically integrating ESG factors across our investment processes, we aim to identify opportunities, enhance operational performance, and reduce risk, thereby strengthening the long-term resilience and value potential of our portfolio companies. Antin’s commitment to sustainability principles began formally in 2009, with the signing of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and has expanded since then, with the formalisation of ESG management tools and frameworks, as well as firm-wide commitments at both portfolio and corporate levels. In 2024, we advanced this strategy by further deploying capital in the energy transition and embedding sustainability more deeply across the investment cycle.

Our commitment to supporting the global transition to a lower-carbon economy remained central to our strategy. As of the end of 2024, we had deployed nearly €5 billion of equity into companies that directly enable this transition, including recent investments in renewable energy platform Opdenenergy in Spain, hydrogen midstream equipment lessor GTL Leasing in the United States, and France’s first independent highspeed rail operator Velvet.

Climate change:

As an infrastructure investor, we see sustainability as fundamental to how our portfolio companies can create value, and just as importantly, how they can protect it. Climate change mitigation and adaptation are of growing importance to a variety of stakeholders, who increasingly scrutinise both excessive carbon emissions and the potential impacts of changing weather patterns. As a result, we are progressively expected to implement coherent carbon reduction plans and climate change adaptation strategies at both corporate and portfolio levels.

When we invest in portfolio companies, there are ESG initiatives that drive value by reducing operational costs. Companies that improve resource efficiency, whether through reduced energy consumption, lower water use, or circular construction practices, achieve real reductions in operational costs. Overall, understanding and integrating climate change issues is of business-critical importance in helping us to future-proof our activities and investments.

Finally, financing is another area where integrating ESG has started to create tangible financial benefits. Many of our portfolio companies are now able to tap into green bonds or sustainability-linked loans which, in Europe, can include margin adjustment terms of 10 to 20 basis points when sustainability targets are achieved. For our large cap infrastructure companies which must secure very large loans to fund the growth of their business, this can represent millions of euros in financing cost savings.

At Antin, we recognize sustainability as a driver of value creation and its implications for our collective future. We strongly believe that engaging in sustainability principles allow us to diminish business risks, increase the financial results of our portfolio companies, and ultimately achieve higher valuations. Our focus has always been on investing in infrastructure that is not only resilient in the face of today's challenges, but capable of fostering sustainable growth and adapting to tomorrow's needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, together with our strategic partner Bocconi University, we continue to explore the evolving landscape of infrastructure investment. This journey, while complex, presents numerous opportunities for innovation and growth. The research conducted by

Professor Gatti and his team is invaluable in helping us maintain a deep understanding of these dynamics. Their academic insights, combined with our ongoing dialogue with leading researchers and faculty members, enable us to approach infrastructure investing with a data-driven, forward-thinking perspective.

I look forward to what is going to be a very stimulating discussion on these topics. With that, I'll turn it over to Professor Gatti.

Thank you.