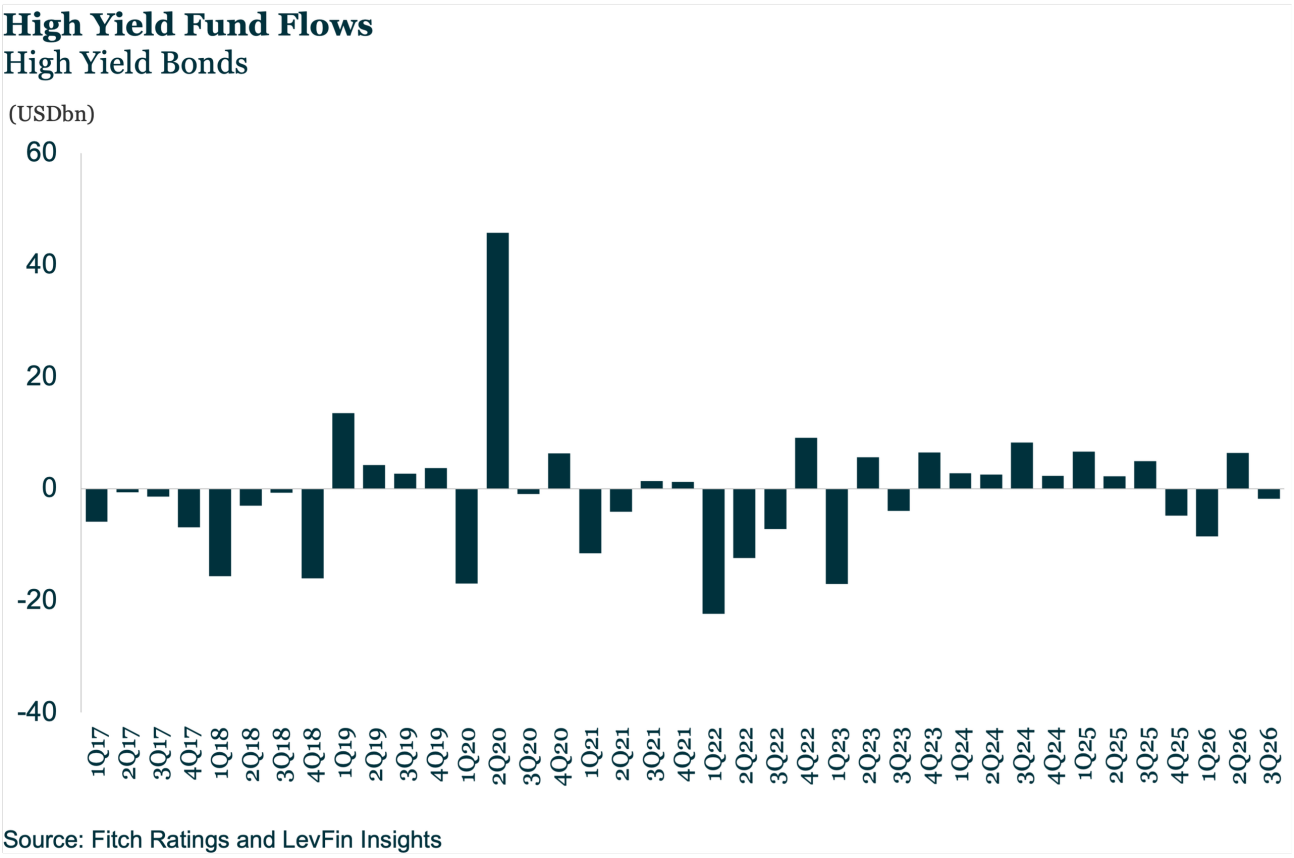
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U.S. Leveraged Finance M&A Rebounds as Credit Quality Pressures Emerge in 3Q26

Fitch Ratings | November 18, 2026



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North American leveraged finance gross issuance moderated in 3Q26 as refinancing activity declined and transaction-related financing increased, according to a new Fitch Ratings report. Leveraged loan gross issuance fell to approximately USD190 billion from USD220 billion in 2Q26. Refinancing, repricing and amend-and-extend activity accounted for 67% of volume, down from 75% in 2Q26. M&A and LBO issuance increased to USD37 billion, or 20% of loan supply, from USD33 billion or 15%. New-issue loan spreads tightened modestly across rating categories.

High-yield (HY) issuance declined to USD81.5 billion from USD103 billion in the prior quarter. M&A-related issuance increased to USD29 billion, or approximately 36% of total supply, the highest share in Fitch's data since 1Q17. Refinancing volume fell to USD32 billion but accounted for 40% of total supply. General-corporate-purpose issuance fell to USD12 billion, or 15% of supply. Primary market access remained open, although secondary-market HY spreads widened, particularly for 'CCC' and lower-rated bonds.