

Biotech on the rebound amid protectionist headwinds, strong currency, and new therapeutic promises

After a start to the year marked by regulatory uncertainties and significant fluctuations in currency markets, the biotech sector is gradually regaining momentum. The first half of 2025 saw the industry searching for direction, compounded by the instability of U.S. healthcare policies under the leadership of the new HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who has imposed sweeping reforms on regulatory bodies. Despite this context, the latest data show encouraging signs.

The Nasdaq Biotechnology Index (NBI) has remained broadly stable since the start of the year, but specific subsectors—such as gene therapies—are displaying remarkable dynamism. One of the key players in this phase is undoubtedly the gene-editing sector. After a more cautious 2024, 2025 is reigniting interest in the transformative potential of gene therapies. In this regard, Eli Lilly's recent acquisition of Verve Therapeutics, a company active in CRISPR-based cardiovascular therapies, has made headlines. The move strengthens Lilly's position in precision medicine and signals confidence in the sector's technological maturation.

Meanwhile, the market eagerly awaits approval of the subcutaneous version (easier to administer) of Leqembi, the anti-Alzheimer's drug from Eisai and Biogen, expected on 31 August. Final approval by the FDA would mark a historic moment for dementia therapies, confirming a trend of tangible progress in the fight against neurodegenerative diseases. The weekly subcutaneous administration represents a breakthrough: data from the Clarity AD study show a 14% greater removal of amyloid plaques compared to intravenous administration. If approved, it would be the first anti-Alzheimer's treatment that can be taken at home, significantly reducing hospital or infusion centre visits with a simple injection.

On the macroeconomic front, since the start of the year, the dollar has lost approximately 12% against the euro, bringing the EUR/USD exchange rate to around 1.18. While this impacts the valuation of the Selectra J. Lamarck Biotech Fund (EUR), it benefits the dollar revenues of U.S. biotech companies exporting to Europe.

In this scenario, the Selectra J. Lamarck Biotech Fund is showing encouraging performance. The Class C (USD) of the fund has recorded a +20% return since the beginning of the year, outperforming its benchmark index and capitalising on the selection of innovative stocks, particularly in the gene-editing sector.

With the second half of 2025 underway, the biotech sector stands at a crossroads between concrete scientific opportunities and macro-financial challenges. The upcoming semester—with key clinical readouts, regulatory decisions, and merger and acquisition activities—could redefine the landscape for many players in the industry.

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Nome	Rendimento totale (%) 1 Giorno	Rendimento totale (%) 1 Week	Rendimento totale (%) 1 mese	Rendimento totale (%) 3 Mesi	Rendimento totale (%) 6 mesi	Rendimento totale (%) YTD ↓
Selectra J. Lamarck Biotech C	2,30%	5,53%	16,35%	31,32%	15,93%	20,46%
Selectra J. Lamarck Biotech A	2,20%	4,32%	14,29%	27,44%	3,33%	7,06%
UBS (Lux) EF Biotech (USD) QL-acc	1,59%	1,59%	7,14%	13,96%	-1,62%	6,94%
UBS (Lux) EF Biotech (USD) Q-acc	1,59%	1,59%	7,12%	13,90%	-1,71%	6,82%
Protea Sectoral Biotech Opps IF USD Acc	1,89%	1,25%	7,76%	11,09%	1,99%	6,81%
Selectra J. Lamarck Biotech B	2,20%	4,30%	14,17%	27,07%	2,73%	6,36%
Selectra J. Lamarck Biotech C	2,20%	4,30%	14,17%	27,07%	2,73%	6,36%
UBS (Lux) EF Biotech (USD) P-acc	1,59%	1,57%	7,03%	13,61%	-2,21%	6,21%
Protea Sectoral Biotech Opps PF USD Acc	1,85%	1,15%	7,56%	10,66%	1,38%	6,14%
Franklin Biotechnology Discv A(acc)HKD	4,98%	4,98%	9,98%	14,29%	2,68%	5,43%
Franklin Biotechnology Discv I(acc)USD	4,98%	5,00%	10,06%	13,19%	2,32%	4,82%
Pictet-Biotech I USD	3,34%	2,69%	8,99%	14,35%	1,86%	4,33%
Franklin Biotechnology Discv A(acc)USD	4,97%	4,97%	9,97%	12,94%	1,87%	4,31%
Franklin Biotechnology Discv N(acc)USD	4,97%	4,97%	9,91%	12,75%	1,51%	3,86%
Pictet-Biotech P USD	3,34%	2,67%	8,90%	14,10%	1,41%	3,81%
Franklin Biotechnology Discv I(acc)EUR-H1	4,95%	4,95%	9,82%	12,50%	1,37%	3,74%
Polar Capital Biotech S Inc	1,48%	0,45%	8,55%	15,98%	0,53%	3,57%
Polar Capital Biotech I Inc	1,48%	0,47%	8,55%	15,90%	0,43%	3,44%