

RobustQuant Weekly Compass | January 23, 2026

 COMPASS FOR EMOTIONAL DISCIPLINE — NOT TRADING ADVICE

Weekly boundaries to help reduce fear and greed in market decisions

1 | At a Glance

Asset	Range	Width	Track Record
S&P 500 (SPX)	6,687 – 7,175	±3.5%	53/56 (94.6%)
Gold (GLD)*	393 – 449	±6.7%	26/27 (96.3%)
REITs (XLRE)*	41 – 44	±3.5%	16/17 (94.1%)

*Newsletter-exclusive coverage

Target: ~95% of weekly closes fall within these ranges

Track record details → robustquant.com/predictions

2 | This Week's Summary

Narratives shifted. Prices decided.

Trump-related tariff headlines, Greenland trade discussions, and CPI prints all escalated during the week. Markets acknowledged the noise but responded selectively. Price behaviour remained the deciding filter.

Key Results:

- S&P 500: **6,940** (mid-upper range) 
- Gold: **421** (upper range) 
- REITs: **42** (upper boundary) 

Pattern of the week: All three assets clustered in upper territory, with **fresh all-time highs in SPX and GLD**. Strength was confirmed directly by price expansion, not by narrative consistency.

3 | What Moved Markets (Jan 13–19)

Trade and Tariff Rhetoric:

Renewed tariff language, including Greenland-related discussions, resurfaced during the week.

Markets have become increasingly accustomed to this type of headline flow. **Actual price behaviour will determine whether these narratives translate into measurable market impact.**

Inflation Data:

CPI prints landed close to expectations, reinforcing the existing pricing environment. Inflation remained a constraint, not a shock.

Markets Near Highs:

S&P 500 and gold both pushed to **fresh all-time highs**, with risk-on and safe-haven assets advancing simultaneously.

→ *For detailed regional breakdowns and economic data, see Appendix at end of newsletter*

4 | S&P 500 (SPX) Boundaries (Jan 23)

🎯 **Range: 6,687 – 7,175**

📊 **Hit Rate: 53/56 weeks (94.6%)**

Last Week's Performance:

Last week: Range 6,716–7,212, closed **6,940** (mid-upper range) 

Current range: 6,687–7,175

The close near **new ATH** reflected continued risk appetite despite headline churn. The range adjusted modestly, responding to completed price behaviour rather than forward narrative assumptions.

For Your Planning:

- Lower zone (6,687–6,850): Where fear often peaks
- Middle zone (6,850–7,020): Normal trading area
- Upper zone (7,020–7,175): Where excitement builds

Remember: These are weekly movement boundaries, not buy/sell signals.

5 | Gold (GLD) Coverage (Jan 23 - Newsletter-Exclusive)

🎯 **Range: 393 – 449**

📊 **Containment: 26/27 weeks (96.3%)**

Last Week's Performance:

Last week: Range 387–446, closed **421** (upper range) 

Current range: 393–449

GLD maintained upper-range positioning close to **fresh ATH** as safe-haven demand remained active alongside equity strength. The adjusted range reflects sustained behaviour rather than event-driven spikes.

For Your Planning:

- Lower zone (393–410): Where fear flows typically emerge
- Middle zone (410–430): Consolidation territory
- Upper zone (430–449): Where safe-haven demand peaks

6 | REITs (XLRE) Coverage (Jan 23 - Newsletter-Exclusive)

 **Range: 41 – 44**

 **Containment: 16/17 weeks (94.1%)**

Last Week's Performance:

Last week: Range 38–42, closed **42** (upper boundary) 

Current range: 41–44

REITs reached the top of last week's range as rate-sensitive assets tracked broader market stability. This move marked a **likely exit from bear territory as defined by RobustQuant's internal models**, confirming improving price structure rather than temporary bounce behaviour.

For Your Planning:

- Lower zone (41–42): Where rate-hike fears typically pressure sector
- Middle zone (42–43): Normal trading area
- Upper zone (43–44): Where rate-cut optimism drives positioning

7 | Psychology & How to Read

This week highlighted the gap between narrative escalation and price confirmation. Fresh highs in both equities and gold illustrated how prices can validate strength even when familiar narratives resurface without immediate confirmation. Headlines shifted rapidly, but prices moved within normal parameters.

What They Show:

Weekly boundaries where markets typically move, helping maintain discipline when narratives multiply.

What They Don't Show:

Buy/sell signals, price targets, or guaranteed outcomes.

The Retail Trap:

Investors often react to headlines instead of price behaviour, buying near upper extremes or selling during routine pullbacks.

Key Point:

Compass tracks behaviour, not narratives. This week, prices validated stability.

8 | Track Record

Performance Since Launch:

- S&P 500: 53 hits in 56 weeks (94.6%)
- Gold: 26 hits in 27 weeks (96.3%)
- REITs: 16 hits in 17 weeks (94.1%)

Containment remained within design parameters across all assets. Results reflect normal operation rather than exceptional conditions. While SPX and GLD are now supported by statistically meaningful sample sizes, **REITs coverage continues to build its statistical base**, with sixteen observed weeks providing increasingly informative signals.

Transparency: All ranges are published before each week starts. No retroactive changes.

9 | Method and Limitations

How Ranges Work:

Ranges combine volatility, trend direction, and momentum to target ~95% weekly containment. The model does not require narrative alignment or macro forecasting.

When Ranges Break:

Breaches indicate shifts beyond normal parameters. These are signals, not failures.

Questions:

Q: Headlines escalated — should behaviour change?

A: Boundaries describe where markets traded, not what actions to take. Decisions depend on pre-defined strategies.

Q: Upper-range clustering — is this a warning?

A: Upper-range positioning reflects location, not direction. Signals emerge only when boundaries fail.

10 | Footer

Next Week: Ranges for January 30 close

Updates: Social media notes if exceptional volatility occurs

This is a hobby project providing market context. Not investment advice. Past performance does not guarantee future results.

Systematic over emotional. Structure over speculation.

APPENDIX | Detailed Market Review (Jan 12–18, 2026)

This appendix summarises last week's economic research in a condensed research-note format. It documents macroeconomic data and policy developments observed during the period. It does not attribute causality to market prices or derive forward-looking conclusions.

United States

U.S. inflation data for December, released during the week, showed continued moderation without a decisive break in underlying pressures. Headline CPI printed at 2.7% year-on-year, easing from 2.8% previously, while the month-on-month increase was 0.3%. Core CPI slowed to 2.6% year-on-year, with a 0.2% monthly increase. Services inflation remained the dominant contributor, with shelter costs rising 3.2% year-on-year and 0.4% month-on-month. Owners' equivalent rent increased 0.3% on the month, keeping housing-related components sticky despite broader disinflation trends. Goods inflation remained subdued, with used vehicle prices falling 1.1% month-on-month, though still up 1.6% year-on-year. Airline fares rose 5.2% on the month, while recreation prices increased 1.2%, the largest monthly rise in that category in decades.

Labour market indicators continued to suggest gradual cooling rather than abrupt deterioration. Initial jobless claims for the week ending January 10 fell to 198,000 from 207,000, with the four-week average declining to 205,000. Continuing claims edged down to 1.884 million. These readings followed December payroll data showing job growth of 50,000 and total 2025 job creation of 584,000, reinforcing the picture of a labour market losing momentum but still operating at historically tight levels. Wage growth moderated modestly but remained elevated relative to pre-pandemic norms.

Industrial activity improved modestly at year-end. Industrial production rose 0.4% month-on-month in December and was up 2.0% year-on-year. Utilities output increased 2.6% on the month, while manufacturing production rose 0.2%. Capacity utilisation ticked higher to 76.3%, with manufacturing utilisation at 75.2%. In rates markets, U.S. Treasury yields moved higher during the week, with the 10-year yield reaching 4.24%, the highest level in more than four months, while the 2-year yield traded around 3.6%. Policy-related headlines increased in volume, including renewed trade and tariff rhetoric, but did not coincide with material changes in the macro data flow during the period.

China

Chinese data released during the week continued to point toward stabilisation following a prolonged slowdown, though without clear signs of acceleration. December trade figures showed exports rising 6.6% year-on-year to approximately USD 335 billion, exceeding expectations, while imports increased 5.7% year-on-year. The resulting monthly trade surplus reached USD 114.1 billion, bringing the full-year 2025 surplus to USD 1.189 trillion, roughly 20% higher than in 2024. The geographic composition of trade continued to shift, with exports to the United States declining by around 20% year-on-year, while shipments to ASEAN rose 13.4% and exports to Africa increased 25.8%.

Domestic demand indicators remained softer. Retail sales growth stayed below historical averages, reflecting subdued household confidence, while the property sector continued to weigh on activity. Investment and transaction volumes in real estate remained weak despite targeted easing measures introduced earlier in the year. Price dynamics remained disinflationary, with consumer inflation low and producer prices still negative on a year-on-year basis.

Policy settings remained accommodative but measured. The PBOC announced a 25 basis point reduction in relending facility rates, lowering the one-year rate to 1.25%, while keeping benchmark loan prime rates unchanged at 3.0% for one-year loans and 3.5% for five-year loans. Additional targeted facilities amounting to CNY 1 trillion were announced to support private enterprises, alongside further allocations for agriculture and small businesses. Overall, policy actions during the week reinforced a gradual stabilisation approach rather than a shift toward aggressive stimulus.

Europe

European macro data remained mixed, reflecting continued divergence between easing inflation pressures and weak growth dynamics. Inflation readings moved closer to central bank targets across several major economies as energy base effects faded, while core inflation moderated only gradually. Services inflation remained elevated relative to goods, underscoring persistent domestic price pressures despite headline disinflation.

Industrial activity showed limited improvement. Euro area industrial production rose 0.7% month-on-month in November and was up 2.5% year-on-year, driven primarily by capital goods, which increased 2.8% on the month. Consumer durables rose 1.3%, while intermediate goods increased 0.6%. National outcomes remained uneven, with Germany posting a 1.4% monthly increase while some smaller economies saw declines. Manufacturing PMIs remained in contraction territory, with services activity providing only partial offset and showing signs of slowing momentum.

Trade data pointed to softer external demand. The euro area recorded a November trade surplus of €9.9 billion, down from €15.4 billion a year earlier and below expectations near €15 billion. Exports fell 3.4% year-on-year, while imports declined 1.3%. Monetary policy communication remained cautious, with ECB officials reiterating data dependence and maintaining the deposit facility rate at 2.0%. Fiscal discussions continued at the national level without a coordinated shift in stance. During the week, renewed tariff-related headlines involving Greenland and potential levies on selected European countries added to headline flow, though without immediate macro data implications.