Private Equity Holding Periods Keep Rising in Every Sector

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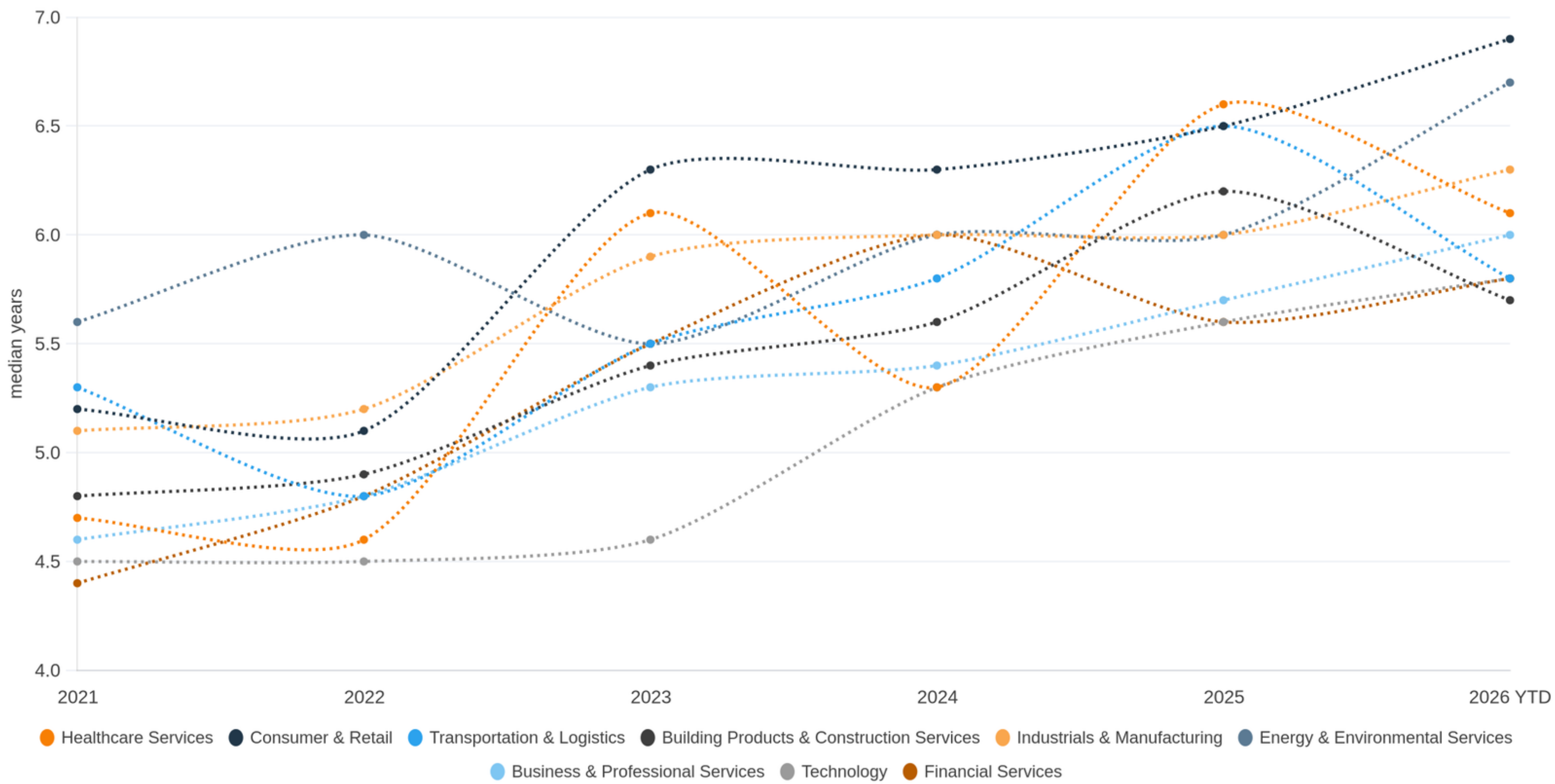
Median Holding Periods by Industry | 2021 - mid-2026

6.0 yrs

Typical Hold Period, 2026 YTD

The median PE investment now takes about a year longer to exit than it did in 2021, a rise of roughly 1.1 years across 13,757 completed exits.

Median holding period trend by industry (years)



Source: Private Equity Info M&A Research Database | privateequityinfo.com | September 2026

Median Holding Period by Industry

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We measured the holding period for every deal, the number of years between investment and exit, and took the median for each industry in each year. Medians keep a handful of unusually long holds from distorting the experience of the typical deal. Industries are sorted by their 2025 median.

Industry	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 YTD	Total exits
Healthcare Services	4.7	4.6	6.1	5.3	6.6	6.1*	983
Consumer & Retail	5.2	5.1	6.3	6.3	6.5	6.9*	1,200
Transportation & Logistics	5.3	4.8	5.5	5.8	6.5	5.8*	472
Building Products & Construction Services	4.8	4.9	5.4	5.6	6.2	5.7*	625
Industrials & Manufacturing	5.1	5.2	5.9	6.0	6.0	6.3*	3,657
Energy & Environmental Services	5.6	6.0	5.5	6.0	6.0	6.7*	836
Business & Professional Services	4.6	4.8	5.3	5.4	5.7	6.0*	2,417
Technology	4.5	4.5	4.6	5.3	5.6	5.8*	2,586
Financial Services	4.4	4.8	5.5	6.0	5.6	5.8*	981

*Figures are medians, in years. * 2026 is a partial year. Total exits span 2021 to mid-2026.*

Analysis & Implications

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A Broad-Based Rise, Not a Sector Story

Holding periods have climbed across all nine industries we evaluated. Even the historically fastest sectors, Technology, Business Services and Financial Services, have stretched from roughly 4.5 years to 5.8 to 6.0 years. Because the trend appears everywhere at once, it reads as a market-wide phenomenon rather than an industry-specific one.

Rates Widened the Buyer-Seller Gap

Higher interest rates since 2022 made financing more expensive, widening the gap between the prices sellers want and what buyers will pay. Rather than sell into a soft market, many investors chose to hold and keep working the asset. These forces reach across the whole economy, so they show up in nearly every sector.

A Genuine Deal Backlog

2021 was not a normal year. Powered by cheap money, PE investments and exits both ran roughly 50% above surrounding years. Hold periods still rising in 2026 suggest a real backlog: a growing stock of aging companies bought in the boom that investors have not yet been able to sell at valuations they will accept.

What Comes Next

Two things will shape the path: the direction of rates and valuations, and the size of the backlog itself. Limited partners are pressing for distributions, so investors are turning to continuation funds and other GP-led deals to return capital. That pool of seasoned assets is exactly the inventory that can fuel a future wave of exits.

Key Outlook

TYPICAL HOLD
6.0 yrs
Median exit, 2026 YTD

RISE SINCE 2021
+1.1 yrs
About a year longer to exit

SECTORS RISING
9 of 9
Every industry evaluated

LONGEST HOLD
6.9 yrs
Consumer & Retail, 2026 YTD

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Private Equity Info

M&A Research Database

Private Equity Info is a cutting-edge M&A research platform that lets dealmakers search, identify, and connect with key executives across the entire M&A landscape. Since 2005, our focus on data accuracy, ease-of-use, and personalized customer service has made us an invaluable partner to investment bankers, private equity firms, and other M&A professionals.

- 130,000+ key executives across 30,900 firms
- 1.1 million private and public companies
- AI-powered natural language search
- Real-time alerts and deal tracking

TruSight, LLC

Deal Sourcing & Origination

TruSight provides subscription-based deal origination, retained buy-side acquisition search, and deal sourcing services for professional investors, private equity funds, family offices, and business intermediaries. Our reputation for broadening and accelerating deal flow has been built through industry expertise, professionalism, and a partnership philosophy.

- Retained buy-side acquisition search
- Intermediary coverage from 13,000+ contacts
- Off-market proprietary deal flow
- Sell-side marketing and distribution

Andy Jones

Founder & Managing Director, Private Equity Info

Leads PEI corporate strategy, product development and growth; background in investment banking and acoustical engineering.

Dan Mahoney

Co-Founder & CEO, TruSight, LLC

Leads outsourced business development and deal origination; background in financial consulting and business strategy.

Private Equity Info was acquired by TruSight, LLC in late 2021, combining cutting-edge M&A data with hands-on deal origination to create an integrated platform for the lower middle market.

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