

# **Business strategy of Ascory Bank AG**

Valid from 1 January 2026

## The Ascory Bank AG

Ascory Bank AG is a German credit institution based in Hamburg with a branch in Sofia, Bulgaria. Founded in 1995, the company employs around 100 people across its various locations. It has been listed on the stock exchange since 2007 and has held a full banking licence since 2013. In 2025, the bank underwent a fundamental restructuring, with new management, clear structures and processes, and a new business strategy. As part of its focused business model as a specialist bank for structured finance, the bank operates in three core business areas: corporate clients/fintech, corporate clients/energy transition and leveraged Finance – each in selected European markets.

The strategic realignment of the business will be accompanied by the renaming of Varengold Bank AG to Ascory Bank AG at the turn of 2025/2026. The new brand will be introduced in a wave migration during the first quarter of 2026, underlining the transformation that has taken place.

## Vision & Strategic Ambitions 2026 of Ascory Bank AG

Ascory Bank positions itself as a specialised credit bank and a reliable financing partner for companies with high growth potential. The bank focuses in particular on start-ups and scale-ups in the target customer segments of fintech (including leasing and factoring institutions) and energy transition, as well as small/mid-caps in leveraged finance transactions (LBO/MBO). The bank's vision is to enable and accelerate growth by offering its customers uncomplicated access to financing and acting as an efficient, fast and reliable financing partner at their side. Key guiding principles are disciplined risk and capital management and RWA-efficient structures. The transformation implemented since 2025 has created the basis for sustainable profitable development and a consistent management framework.

Ascory Bank has established the following strategic guidelines:

### 1. Growth and portfolio tailoring

The growth-oriented expansion of the interest-bearing loan portfolio will be focused on three business areas, in line with defined RWA efficiency criteria and structuring principles. Planning a sustainable growth path is a top priority.

### 2. Return/risk profile

Achieving the right level of profitability, taking into account the risk profile, is essential. This profitability should be based on a number of key factors, including hurdle rates, defined minimum margins and targets for RWA productivity, NPL ratio and distance to wall.

### 3. Capital and refinancing position

It is vital for the company to maintain a capital and liquidity position that exceeds regulatory minimums and to pursue the diversification of our refinancing base through retail and institutional funding, leveraging the market in Bulgaria as well.

### 4. Customer and market positioning

We will establish stable, long-term customer relationships in the defined target customer segments, embedding them in a powerful partner ecosystem of banks, platforms and investors.

### 5. Operational and technological excellence

We will develop a fit-for-purpose, largely digitalised operating model with clear processes, a robust database and a higher degree of automation in core processes.

#### 6. Governance, risk and compliance

The establishment of a conservative risk culture will be characterised by a clearly defined risk appetite, an integrated risk dashboard and functional second and third line of defence structures. In 2026, the effectiveness of governance will be further enhanced through uniform policy frameworks, improved reporting and strengthened compliance prevention measures.

These ambitions serve as a liaison between the bank's overarching vision and its business area strategies, in addition to the departments that perform overall bank management functions. They guarantee that the bank maintains a clear sense of direction in its transformation efforts, while also allowing for the necessary flexibility to adapt to market and regulatory developments.

The bank's business and risk strategy objectives are focused on ensuring long-term future viability and competitiveness, with appropriate resilience. In this context, the bank is pursuing the following strategic objectives by the end of the planning period 2029:

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Key figure</u>	<u>Target value 2029</u>
1. Increase in return on equity	ROE	> 10 %
2. Improvement in cost/income ratio	CIR	< 65 %
3. Adequate capitalisation	CET1	> 14 %