

Call for evidence on the European Commission mandate regarding the PRIIPs Regulation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

1. General Information

* Please indicate the desired disclosure level of the comments you are submitting:

- Confidential
 Public

* Stakeholder

Institut des actuaires - France

* Sector

- Investment management
 Insurance
 Banking (structured products/ derivative products)
 Other

If other, please specify:

French association of Actuaries

* Contact person (name and surname)

* Contact person email

Contact person phone number

2. Introduction

In the September 2020 new Capital Markets Union Action Plan, the European Commission (Commission) announced its intention to publish a strategy for retail investments in Europe in the first half of 2022.

In May 2021, as part of its evidence gathering, the Commission launched a three-month public consultation on a wide array of aspects related to retail investor protection. [1] The Commission is also undertaking an extensive study that was launched in 2020, which involves analysis of the PRIIPs Key Information Document (KID), as well as other disclosure regimes for retail investments. This study will involve extensive consumer testing and mystery shopping, with the aim to ensure that any future changes to the rules will be conceived from the perspective of what is useful and necessary for consumers.

On 27 July 2021, the Commission sent to the JC of the ESAs a request for advice asking the ESAs to assist the Commission in the preparation of legislative proposals implementing aspects of the retail investment strategy, and more specifically regarding a review of Regulation (EU) 1286/2014 on packaged retail and insurance-based investment products (PRIIPs) [2]. The deadline for the ESAs to provide their advice is 30 April 2022.

The Commission invited the ESAs to provide advice on the following main areas:

- A general survey on the use of the KID
- A general survey on the operation of the comprehension alert in the KID
- A survey of the practical application of the rules laid down in the PRIIPs Regulation
- An assessment of the effectiveness of the administrative sanctions, measures, and other enforcement actions for infringements of the PRIIPs Regulation
- An assessment of the extent to which the PRIIPs Regulation is adapted to digital media
- An examination of several questions concerning the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation

For most of the areas set out above, additional more specific elements to be addressed were identified in the mandate; for instance for the general survey on the use of the KID there are four sub-elements, including to provide evidence on the extent to which marketing information aligns with the information in the KID.

Notwithstanding the mandate provided by the Commission, the information collected and analysis conducted by the ESAs since 2018 would indicate that changes to the PRIIPs Regulation are needed in other areas, besides those addressed in the mandate, in order to achieve the optimal outcomes for retail investors. Indeed, the ESAs have previously provided their views on the need for changes to the PRIIPs Regulation in a number of areas. [3] Consequently, this call for evidence requests feedback on a range of other issues, where the ESAs are considering the relevance to additionally provide advice to the Commission.

In parallel with sending the call for advice on the PRIIPs Regulation to the ESAs, the Commission also sent separate calls for advice individually to EIOPA [4] and ESMA [5] regarding other aspects of retail investor protection, as part of the work to develop a retail investment strategy. The ESAs are seeking to coordinate the work undertaken for these different mandates.

The ESAs acknowledge that the importance and complexity of the topics set out in the Commission's

request for advice call for a thorough involvement of stakeholders to ensure that they can adequately contribute to the formulation of the advice from the beginning of the process. At the same time, the short timeframe available to prepare this advice, places constraints on the type of consultation and time that can be given for responses. Taking into account these constraints, as well as the nature of the request from the Commission, which seeks various different types of evidence regarding current market practices, the ESAs have decided to launch a call for evidence. The responses provided will be used to shape the technical advice to the Commission. The ESAs also plan to hold a stakeholder event in Q1 2022 before finalising the advice. Further details about this event and how to register will be available via the relevant sections of the ESAs' websites in due course.

Where questions in this call for evidence ask for respondents' "experiences" regarding a certain issue or topic, **please provide information regarding the basis for the views provided**. This might include whether the views are based on actual experiences, such as selling, advising on, or buying PRIIPs, a survey of market participants, academic research undertaken etc. Manufacturers of products, which currently benefit from an exemption to produce a KID, such as fund managers, are not precluded from sharing evidence or experience under this call, but should clarify the context in which they would provide comments.

[1] EU strategy for retail investors (europa.eu)

[2] Call for advice

[3] See for example the Joint ESA Supervisory Statement – application of scope of the PRIIPs Regulation to bonds (JC 2019 64), or the Final Report following consultation on draft regulatory technical standards to amend the PRIIPs KID (JC 2020 66).

[4] Call for advice to EIOPA regarding certain aspects relating to retail investor protection | Eiopa (europa.eu)

[5] Call for advice to the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) regarding certain aspects relating to retail investor protection (europa.eu)

1. Please provide any general observations or comments that you would like to make on this call for evidence, including any relevant information on you/your organisation and why the topics covered by this call for evidence are relevant for you/your organisation.

3. Call for evidence

3.1 General survey on the use of the KID

Extract from the call for advice

A general survey on the use of the PRIIPs KID across the Union, including, to the extent feasible, evidence on:

- *The number and type of products and their market share for which PRIIPs KIDs are produced and distributed.*

- *The recent developments and trends on the market for PRIIPs and other retail investment products.*
- *The extent to which PRIIPs KIDs are used by product distributors and financial advisors to choose the products they offer to their clients.*
- *To the extent feasible, the extent to which marketing information aligns with or differs from the information in the PRIIPs KIDs.*

In terms of this general survey, it can be relevant to clarify that regarding the third bullet point in the mandate above, the ESAs understand that evidence is sought on the extent to which the information in the KID is used by persons advising on, or selling, PRIIPs separate from the obligation to provide the KID to the retail investor. This might include, for example, identifying if a product is suitable for the retail investor. For this topic, the ESAs would like to ask for feedback to the following questions:

2. Do you have, or are you aware of the existence of, data on the number, type and market share of different types of PRIIPs? If you have such data, would you be in a position to share it with the ESAs?

3. In your position as product distributor or financial advisor, to what extent do you make use of KIDs to choose or compare between the products you offer to your clients? In case of trading online, does your platform offer an automatised tool that can help the retail investor in making comparisons among products, for instance using KIDs?

4. If this is the case, what is preventing distributors or financial advisors from using the KID when they choose a product for a client?

5. In your experience, e.g. as a retail investor or association representing retail investors, to what extent are KIDs used by distributors or financial advisors to support the investment process? Is marketing material used instead or given greater emphasis?

6. What are your experiences regarding the extent of the differences between marketing information and the information in the KID? What types of differences do you consider to be the most material or relevant in terms of completeness, plain language, accuracy and clarity? What do you think might be the reason(s) for these differences?

3.2 General survey on the operation of the comprehension alert

Extract from the call for advice:

A general survey on the operation of the comprehension alert, taking into account any guidance developed by competent authorities in this respect, the survey should gather data on the number and types of products that include a comprehension alert in the PRIIPs KIDs, and to the extent feasible, evidence on whether retail investors and financial advisors consider the comprehension alert in their investment decisions and/or advice.

For this topic, the ESAs would like to ask for feedback to the following questions:

7. What are your experiences regarding the types of products that include a comprehension alert?

8. Do you have or are you aware of the existence of data on the number and type of products that include a comprehension alert? If you have such data, would you be in a position to share it with the ESAs?

9. What are your experiences regarding the extent to which retail investors take into account the inclusion of the comprehension alert?

10. As a retail investor or association representing retail investors, are you aware of the existence of a comprehension alert for some PRIIPs?

11. What are your experiences regarding the extent to which financial advisors consider the comprehension alert?

3.3 Survey on the practical application of the rules

Extract from the call for advice:

A survey of the practical application of the rules laid down in the PRIIPs Regulation, taking due account of developments in the market for retail investment products, which should include practical evidence on:

- *To the extent feasible, the amount and nature of costs per PRIIP to various market participants of complying with the requirements of the PRIIPs Regulation, including the costs of manufacturing, reviewing, revising, and publishing PRIIPs KIDs, including as a proportion of total PRIIP costs.*

- *To the extent feasible, the extent to which the PRIIPs Regulation is applied in a consistent manner across the EU for the most commonly sold types of PRIIPs.*
- *The supervision of the PRIIPs KID, including the percentage of cases where inaccurate PRIIPs KIDs were identified by NCAs.*
- *The number of relevant mis-selling events before and after the introduction of the PRIIPs KID, including through data on the number of complaints received, number of sanctions imposed, and other relevant data.*

Concerning this topic, the ESAs would like to ask for feedback to the following questions:

12. For PRIIP manufactures or sellers:

12. a) Please describe the different types of costs incurred to comply with the PRIIPs Regulation.

Apart from operational costs (build and run), the amount of which the French institute of actuaries is not in position to provide an accurate assessment, we have to underline a significant increase in the legal risks, introduced by this regulation. Indeed, the failure to inform the insured may be assessed in a very formal way by the courts, with very serious consequences (cancellation of the contract and refund of the sums paid). This creates a free option for the subscriber that can be easily activated given the nature of the PRIIPs regulation and its interpretability. In case of a strong market downturn, it is likely that the loopholes created by this regulation could be systematically used by the most sophisticated and important policyholders.

12. b) Can you provide an estimate of the average costs per PRIIP of complying with the requirements of the PRIIPs Regulation? Where possible, please provide a breakdown between the main types of costs, e.g. manufacturing, reviewing, publishing, etc.

12. c) Can you provide an estimate of what proportion of the total costs for the product are represented by the costs of complying with the PRIIPs Regulation?

13. What are your experiences regarding the extent to which the PRIIPs Regulation is applied in a consistent manner across the EU for the most commonly sold types of PRIIPs? What are the main areas of inconsistencies?

3.4 Use of digital media

Extract from the call for advice

An assessment of the extent to which the PRIIPs Regulation is adapted to digital media. This survey shall include an evidence-based assessment of:

- *To the extent feasible, the actual use of various types of physical and digital media for delivering or displaying the PRIIPs KID to retail investors.*
- *To the extent feasible, the preferred digital or physical media for retail investors to access and read PRIIPs KIDs, and the appropriateness of the PRIIPs Regulation for allowing access to and readability of PRIIPs KID on such platforms.*
- *The appropriateness of the approach taken in the PEPP Regulation 2019/1238 for displaying the PEPP KID on digital media for the PRIIPs KID.*

Article 14 of the PRIIPs Regulation lays down rules regarding the types of media that can be used to provide the KID to the retail investor. It is specified that the use of paper format should be the default option where a PRIIP is offered on a face-to-face basis, but that it is also possible to provide the KID using a durable medium other than paper or by means of a website, if certain conditions are met. These conditions include, for example, that the retail investor has been given the choice between paper and the use of another durable medium or website.

The PEPP Regulation[1] provides rules regarding the distribution of the PEPP KID either electronically or via another durable medium in Article 24. For the PEPP KID, electronic distribution can be seen as the “default” approach, but customers need to be informed about their right to request a copy on another durable medium, including paper, free of charge.

For PEPP KIDs provided in electronic format, the PEPP Regulation also allows for the layering of information (Article 28(4)). This means that detailed parts of the information can be presented through pop-ups or through links to accompanying layers. In general terms, layering allows the structure of the information to be presented in different layers of relevance: for example from the information “at a glance” that is essential for all audiences, to more detailed information being readily available in a subsequent layer for those interested, and so forth.

Concerning this topic, the ESAs would like to ask for feedback to the following questions:

[1] REGULATION (EU) 2019/1238 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 20 June 2019 on a pan-European Personal Pension Product (PEPP) (OJ L 198, 25.7.2019, p. 1)

14. Do you have or are you aware of the existence of data on the use of different media? If you have such data, would you be in a position to share it with the ESAs?

15. What are your experiences as a product manufacturer or product distributor or financial advisor regarding the preferred media for retail investors to access or read the KID? Are there challenges for retail investors to receive the KID in their preferred media, such as due to a certain medium not being offered by the distributor?

16. How do you as a retail investor, or association representing retail investors, prefer to receive or view the KID?

17. What are your experiences regarding the preferred media for product distributors and financial advisors when using the KID?

18. Should changes be made to the PRIIPs Regulation so that the KID is better adapted to use on different types of media?

19. Do you think it would be appropriate to apply the approach taken in the PEPP Regulation 2019 /1238 (highlighted above) to the PRIIPs KID?

3.5 Scope of the PRIIPs Regulation

Extract from the call for advice:

An examination of the following questions concerning the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation:

- *whether the exemption of the products referred to in Article 2(2) points (d), (e), and (g) of the PRIIPs Regulation from the scope of PRIIPs should be maintained, in view of sound standards for consumer protection, including comparisons between financial products.*
- *whether the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation should be extended to additional financial products.*

The points referred to Article (2) of the PRIIPs Regulation concern:

(d) securities as referred to in points (b) to (g), (i) and (j) of Article 1(2) of Directive 2003/71/EC;
(e) pension products which, under national law, are recognised as having the primary purpose of providing the investor with an income in retirement and which entitle the investor to certain benefits;
(g) individual pension products for which a financial contribution from the employer is required by national law and where the employer or the employee has no choice as to the pension product or provider.

In 2019 the ESAs published a Supervisory Statement on the application of the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation to bonds (JC 2019 64). In this statement it was stated that:

Ultimately, in order to fully address the risk of divergent applications by NCAs, the ESAs recommend that during the upcoming review of the PRIIPs Regulation, the co-legislators introduce amendments to the Regulation in order to specify more precisely which financial instruments fall within the scope of the Regulation. We would also recommend to reflect more expressly the stated intention of the PRIIPs

Regulation[1] to address packaged or wrapped products rather than assets which are held directly, to avoid any legal uncertainty on this point.

Taking this Statement into account, the ESAs are interested in feedback on a number of additional issues besides those specified in the mandate from the Commission. Thus, concerning the topic of scope, the ESAs would like to ask the following questions:

[1] This is stated in recitals 6 and 7.

20. Do you think that the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation should be extended to any of the products referred to in Article 2(2), points (d), (e) and (g)? Please explain your reasoning.

Extending the scope of PRIIPs to pension contracts is not desirable because the document is not tailored to this type of product, including:

- There is no provision for information on benefit options upon retirement,
- Such products have no recommended holding period (the holding period will depend on the subscription date and the retirement age of each client),
- PRIIPs is a regulation oriented towards pure accumulation products without progressive consumption of savings. More generally, the question of how to exit from a retirement contract is an issue that arises in very different terms: In a number of cases, the insured has no choice, being bound by contract or regulation. In other cases, he may have choices whose scope varies according to his contract and the framework in which it was taken out. These are often important choices (discount rate, prospects of revaluation, additional guarantees such as guaranteed annuities or reversionary guarantee) that requires a real counseling approach.

21. Do you think that the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation should be changed with respect to other specific types of products and if so, how?

Indeed, some specific products should not be included in the PRIIPs framework. Some "multisupport" insurance contracts (i.e. multioption products where options are investment vehicles refer to "bare" securities, generally equity stocks, as units linked vehicles. The same contracts may also sometimes refer to bonds. These securities are not at all packaged products and the choice made by the policyholder to invest his savings in them is similar to the one he could make by buying them via a securities account. In this sense, the product is not packaged at all and it makes no sense to create a specific KID for an equity stock. Moreover, certain products on the French market, such as funeral guarantees, fall within the scope of PRIIPs simply because they have a surrender value without being savings products in the strict sense. The PRIIPs framework is very poorly adapted to these products, whereas it would be very useful to provide them with a convenient information framework. This observation illustrates the great diversity of insurance products and invites for seeking greater latitude for implementation and adaptation of the framework.

22. Do you think changes should be made to specify more precisely which types of financial instruments fall within the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation? Please specify the amendments that you think are necessary to the Regulation.

23. Do you have specific suggestions regarding how to ensure that the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation captures packaged or wrapped products that provide an indirect exposure to assets or reference values, rather than assets which are held directly?

No particular suggestion. On the contrary, PRIIPs currently presents the problem of covering non-packaged products simply because they are invested through a life insurance contract (see Q. 20).

24. Do you agree with the ESA Supervisory Statement relating to bonds and what are your experiences regarding the application of the Statement?

We have no comments to make on this statement, which seems to us to correctly capture the reality of the market with regard to the objectives of PRIIPs.

25. Do you think that the definitions in the PRIIPs Regulation relating to the scope should take into account other elements or criteria, e.g. relating to the maturity of the product, or relating to a product only having a decumulation[1] objective, or where there is not active enrolment[2]?

[1] For example an annuity.

[2] This might include, for example, employment based incentive schemes

The issue of decumulation is a sensitive one. We believe it is necessary to exclude from the scope of Priips the contracts that only include a decumulation phase. For contracts with a savings and decumulation phase, the information provided by PRIIPs should be limited to the savings phase only.

26. Do you think that the concept of products being “made available to retail investors” (Article 5(1) of the PRIIPs Regulation) should be clarified, and if so, how?

No need identified.

27. Do you think it would be beneficial to develop a taxonomy of PRIIPs, that is, a standardised classification of types of PRIIPs to facilitate understanding of the scope and that could also be used as a basis for the information on the “type of the PRIIP” in the ‘What is this product?’ section of the KID (Article 8(3)(c)(i) of the PRIIPs Regulation)? If yes, do you have suggestions for how this could be done?

Such a taxonomy would most likely come up against the reality of the market and not only the diversity of products, but also their ability to hybridize. We do not exclude that locally rules can be observed (either from professionals or from the authorities) targeting certain categories of products that are well identified and recognized by all market players. However, this would not be systematic and would probably only be relevant at a local level.

3.6 Differentiation between different types of PRIIPs

Following a targeted consultation on PRIIPs towards the end of 2018, the ESAs’ Final Report published in February 2019 (JC 2019 6.2), which proceeded further work on a review of the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation, stated (page 14):

- Differentiation between different types of PRIIPs: taking into account information regarding challenges to apply the KID to specific product types, for example very short-term products or specific types of insurance or pension products, it is intended to analyse if it is appropriate to introduce some additional differentiation in how the rules apply to different types of products, while still adhering to the overarching aim of comparability between substitutable products.

This aspect was considered during the review of the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation initiated in 2019, but this work was conducted within the constraints of the existing PRIIPs Regulation. In the context of reviewing the PRIIPs Regulation, consideration could be given to the following types of approaches:

- The development of broad product groupings or buckets of similar products. A more tailored approach could be taken for each of these groupings, with the aim to ensure the meaningfulness of the information and prioritising comparability within these groupings. This might also ease the comparability between the PRIIPs Regulation and sectoral legislation (such as MiFID, IDD) on certain disclosure requirements;
- A reduced degree of standardisation in the KID template;
- Provisions that would allow for supervisory authorities to grant exemptions or waivers from the requirements in duly justified cases.

28. Do you think that the current degree of standardisation of the KID is detrimental to the proper understanding and comparison of certain types of PRIIPs? If so, which products are concerned?

The approach adopted comes up against the very wide variety of savings products and the diversity of insurance products among savings products. As a result, the framework is not appropriate for a large number of products. This also leads to legal risks due to this inadequacy, which often makes the implementation of the regulation questionable, subject to interpretation.

It is important to recognize that standardization intended to allow comparison between unrelated products (in particular because they are marketed in different countries, because they meet different needs or because they are part of different projects and constraints specific to the policyholder) does not bring anything to the insured. We suggest that more consideration be given to existing local regulations, where they exist, and to identify good practices.

This could create a more effective framework for comparison, at least on the leading products in their market, and also provide a more appropriate framework for understanding (allowing, for example, the correct consideration of contingency guarantees that may exist in a savings insurance contract).

This desire for standardization also involves the use of a single terminology that is sometimes not adapted to insurance and can create difficulties of understanding.

29. Do you think that greater differentiation based on the approaches highlighted above, is needed within the PRIIPs Regulation? If so what type of approach would you favour or do you have alternative suggestions?

It is paradoxical that "multisupports" (i.e. multi- investment vehicles contracts) in the French market have experienced such difficulties in implementing the PRIIPs regulation, whereas they are those which are the closest to non-insurance savings products. Taking these saving products characteristics into account in a better way would make it possible to use this similarity more effectively to compare these products more easily with their non-insurance counterparts in a cross-sectoral approach.

At the initial implementation of the regulation, this was made possible by the possibility to communicate the ICD, which constitutes a recognized and effective information framework. The communication of the KIID of

the funds offered in the multisupport insurance contracts has thus allowed a really effective and adapted comparison from one sector to another. For the same reasons, the introduction of adapted methodologies as for the calculation of costs on UCITS seems to us to be a step in the right direction, but must be implemented in a consistent manner.

In particular, the new version of the RTS introduces differences in the calculation and display of costs (detailed table) between IBIPs and other products:

- IBIPs: calculation of the impact of costs on performance, expressed in % and with a valuation hypothesis corresponding to the median scenario

- Other products: calculation of costs in euros, with a zero valuation assumption.

Not only does the difference in display (% vs €) not allow for direct comparability between IBIPs and other products, but above all, the method of calculating costs in terms of impact on yield with a positive valuation hypothesis will lead to higher costs than those calculated with zero valuation: at equal cost, IBIPs will appear artificially more expensive than other products.

This difference is admissible for products that are not intended to be compared. On the other hand, for a multisupport insurance contract whose funds are identical to those available in a securities account, and which are subject to the other rule, this gap is very penalizing and is based more on the legal form than on the substance of the product. This cost approach should not be reserved for UCITS alone, as some types of insurance contracts (in particular multi-investment vehicles insurance contracts with no or few biometric coverage) have very similar cost structures.

30. Do you have suggestions for how a product grouping or product buckets could be defined?

3.7 Complexity and readability of the KID

Taking into account the views previously expressed by some stakeholders that the information in the KID is overly complex and contributes towards an information overload for the retail investor, the ESAs would like to ask for suggestions on how the KID could be improved in this respect.

There can also be a link between this issue and the use of techniques such as layering as referred to above in the context of the digital KID (see Section 3.4), as well as other design techniques, such as the inclusion of visual icons or dashboards at the top of documents[1].

[1] Dashboards can include the most essential information at the top of the document. This is the approach taken, for example, for the PEPP KID - "PEPP at a glance" in Annex I of PEPP Delegated Regulation 2021/473 point 4 and the template in part II.

31. Would you suggest specific changes to Article 8 of the PRIIPs Regulation in order to improve the comprehensibility or readability of the KID?

32. How could the structure, format or presentation of the KID be improved e.g. through the use of visual icons or dashboards?

Life insurance products can be more or less complex. However, even a very simple product is subject to rules (such as taxation) that require a good understanding of the issues by the client or prospect. In this

respect, a simplified document cannot completely replace an advisory approach. It seems important to us to emphasize that the information approach must not overshadow the advisory approach.

The use of icons or very simplified information can, on the other hand, play a role in alerting the prospect or helping him to position the product in a framework in which he already knows the main references (e.g. saving vs biometric coverage, guaranteed vs not guaranteed, free payment vs regular premium, etc.). A SRRI grid is a visual and simplified communication that has the advantage of being simple, well identifiable to prospects who have already encountered it and have mastered its meaning. In addition, this type of information, which is not or only slightly quantitative, has the merit of presenting a degree of precision consistent with the reliability with which the quantities concerned (risk in this case) can be measured. In this sense, they present less risk of misunderstanding than performance scenarios. For example, the absence of liquidity or capital guarantees could fall within this very simplified communication framework.

3.8 Performance scenarios and past performance

In the ESAs' draft regulatory technical standards (RTS) to amend the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation submitted to the Commission in February 2021[1] (and adopted by the Commission on 7 September 2021 [2]), the ESAs included a proposed new requirement for certain types of investment funds and insurance-based investment products to publish information on the past performance of the product and refer to this within the KID. This approach was taken so that the availability of this information would be known, and the information would be published in a standardised and comparable format.

However, the ESAs also stated in the Final Report[3] accompanying the RTS that (on page 4):

the ESAs would still recommend, as a preferred approach, to include past performance information within the main contents of the KID on the basis that it is key information to inform retail investors about the risk-reward profile of certain types of PRIIPs. Since it has been argued that the intention of the co-legislators was for performance scenarios to be shown instead of past performance, it is understood that a targeted amendment to Article 8 of the PRIIPs Regulation would be needed to allow for this. A consequential amendment is also considered necessary in this case to allow the 3 page limit (in Article 6(4)) to be exceeded to 4 pages where past performance information would be included in the KID;

Besides the issue of past performance, the ESAs' work under the empowerment in Article 8(5) regarding the methodology underpinning the performance scenarios has raised significant challenges. Since the ESAs first started to develop these methodologies from 2014 onwards, it has proved very difficult to design appropriate performance scenarios for the different types of products included within the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation that would allow for appropriate comparisons between products, avoid the risk of generating unrealistic expectations amongst retail investors and be understandable to the average retail investor. In particular, no academic consensus has been reached on how to develop common performance scenarios that would be equally appropriate for all types of PRIIPs, proving the inherent difficulty of such an approach.

In this context, the ESAs would like to ask for feedback on:

[1] EIOPA's Board of Supervisors agrees on changes to the PRIIPs key information document | Eiopa (europa.eu).

[2] Implementing and delegated acts | European Commission (europa.eu)

[3] JC 2020 66 (30 June 2020)

33. Do you agree with the ESAs' assessment in the Final Report (JC 2020 66) regarding the treatment of past performance?

The communication of past performance seems to us to be essential information when the product lends itself to it. We agree with the ESAs' analysis on this point. On the other hand, the question arises of the coexistence of past performance and performance scenarios (see next question).

34. Would you suggest changes to the requirement in Article 8(3)(d)(iii) of the PRIIPs Regulation concerning the information on potential future performance, and if so what would you specifically change in the Regulation?

The question of the potential performance of the investment is an essential point in the insured's choice. But it is not the only one, since the risk specific to the investment is at least as important. Any information on an investment can only come from the observation of the past behavior of the asset or equivalent assets, whether it is a question of assessing the performance or the risk.

When the product is simple enough to have a direct-reading performance track record (such as a UCITS), the disclosure of past performance, along with the warning, systematic on the French market, that past performance is no guarantee of future performance, seems to us to be the best approach. It allows the information provided to remain very factual. Conversely, the communication of performance scenarios is a more complex process, which introduces very significant biases and questionable assumptions whose potential impacts are impossible for the policyholder to understand. The policyholder is likely to retain only the result, whose precision is misleading.

By contrast the usual combination of

- a risk class;
- past performance

seems to us by far the best compromise. The risk class determination does not suffer from the same deficiencies as the performance scenarios. On the one hand, the assessment of past risk (often assessed via the second-order momentum of the distribution of returns) is relatively stable; on the other hand, the fact that it is divided into IRRS classes mitigates the risk linked to the unpredictability inherent in the behavior of financial markets.

When these conditions are met (availability of a net asset value directly related to the redemption value), the information system should be limited to these data and avoid providing performance scenarios. This would not be the case for certain products such as structured products which have no history and whose pay-off is complex.

As stated by the ESAs, no academic consensus has been reached on how to develop common performance scenarios that would be equally appropriate for all types of PRIIPs, proving the inherent difficulty of such an approach.

3.9 PRIIPs offering a range of options for investment (Multi-Option Products (“MOPs”))

In the ESA Consultation Paper of October 2019 on proposed amendments to the PRIIPs KID (JC 2019 63), the ESAs stated that their analysis of the implementation of the rules for MOPs indicated some significant challenges regarding the clarity and usefulness of the information provided to retail investors. In particular, it was stated that (page 51):

Where a generic KID is used (in accordance with Article 10(b) of the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation), it is difficult for the investor to identify the total costs related to a particular investment option. This arises

because the generic KID shows a range of costs, but does not always identify which costs are specific to an investment option and which costs relate to the insurance contract. At the same time, it is understood that the information on the underlying investment option (in accordance with Article 14 of the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation), does not usually include the total costs of investing in that option. Therefore, it is often not possible for the investor to identify from the generic KID the costs that may apply in addition to those shown in the option-specific information.

One of the proposals in the Consultation Paper was to introduce a differentiated treatment for the 'most commonly selected investment options' (page 52). In the final draft RTS following the consultation, the proposals relating to the most commonly selected investment options were not included taking into account various implementation challenges raised by respondents to the public consultation.

However, the ESAs introduced some specific changes to the approach for MOPs, for example to require the separate disclosure in certain cases of the costs of the insurance contract or wrapper. It was considered that these changes would result in material improvements to the current KID. At the same time, despite these proposed changes, there are still considered to be material issues that were not possible to address within the constraints of the review of the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation.

In the Final Report (JC 2020 66), the ESAs also stated at that stage that they consider the optimal way to address the challenges for MOPs is to use digital solutions, but that this would require changes to the PRIIPs Regulation.

As part of the May 2021 consultation from the Commission on the Retail Investment Strategy, feedback was also requested on the approach for MOPs to require a single, tailor-made KID, reflecting the preferred underlying investment options of each investor, to be provided.

In this context, the ESAs would like to ask for feedback on the following questions regarding potential alternative approaches for MOPs that might require a change of the PRIIPs Regulation:

35. Would you be in favour of requiring a KID to be prepared for each investment option (in accordance with 10(a) of the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation) in all cases, i.e. for all products and for all investment options[1]? What issues or challenges might result from this approach?

[1] This approach assumes complete investment in a single investment option and requires the KID to include all costs.

This solution is not at all adapted to the French market. Almost all contracts on the French market fall into the category of MOPs. It is important to specify that the "options" of these MOPs consist essentially in the possibility to choose the funds in which the savings will be invested. Other types of options, such as contingency coverage, are much more limited. The only one, which is fairly common, is the floor guarantee against market fluctuations. This is why these contracts are called "multi-support", each "support"/investment vehicle corresponding to a fund : unit linked funds (UCITS, real estate funds) or euro funds (general account - with profit sharing). The insured is free to choose the allocation of his savings. He can also choose to benefit from automatic arbitration rules, in particular to maintain, at an agreed frequency, the allocation chosen initially.

It would be extremely costly and materially complex for the insurer to produce a document containing both the information specific to the various funds on the one hand and of the contract ("wrapper") on the other. This would automatically result in an additional cost with no tangible benefit for the policyholder, with a probable reduction in the range of investment vehicles offered.

French regulations have always chosen to separate the information on the contract, which is the exclusive responsibility of the insurer, from the information on the investment vehicles of the contract. The insurer is required to provide this information but, it can legally rely on the documentation prepared by the fund manager.

In our opinion, for the sake of clarity of information, it is appropriate to allow a clear separation between these two levels and these two distinct sources of information.

Moreover, the approach considered in Q.35 would make no sense in consumer terms. Indeed, the resulting documents would present the insurance contract fully invested in UCITS A or fully invested in UCITS B, etc. Such configurations can only constitute "options" in very exceptional situations, since in the vast majority of cases, the policyholder's interest and the advice that should be given to him or her is to diversify the investment by allocating savings to a reasonable number of funds. This approach would therefore be misleading in that it would tend to support the idea that investing 100% of one's savings in a single fund would be a viable investment strategy.

36. Would you be in favour of requiring an approach involving a general product information document (along the lines of a generic KID) and a separate specific information document for each investment option, but which avoids the use of cost ranges, such as either:

- **A specific information document is provided on each investment option, which would include inter alia all the costs of the product, and a generic KID focusing more on the functioning of the product and which does not include inter alia specific information on costs?; or**
- **The costs of the insurance contract or wrapper would be provided in a generic KID (as a single figure) and the costs of the underlying investment option (as a single figure) would be provided in the specific information document?**

What issues or challenges might result from these approaches?

The current organization of the PRIIPs documents does not allow a good understanding by the client of the costs of the contract.

For the reasons mentioned in the previous question Q.35, the first solution considered in Q.36, e.g of a specific KID including the cost of the wrapper is neither feasible nor desirable. From an operational point of view, it is more or less the same as the solution mentioned in Q.35. The very structure of the MOP contract on the French market leads to a distinction between the wrapper costs and the fund costs. French regulations require that each contract explicitly mention, in a simplified document (a "framed" one pager at the head of the contract), all the charges of the contract. It is specified that the charges specific to the units of account are added. Today, the requirements for the generic KID do not allow for this communication of charges. It would therefore be desirable to adapt the structure of the information document to present these charges.

Conversely, the approach of presenting the impact of the combination of front-end fees and trailer fees does not seem to us to work and should be questioned. Indeed, it depends directly on the recommended holding period, which is not really relevant for this type of contract (because it does not depend as much from the wrapper than from the underlying investment chosen). The entrance fees are paid only once for each payment. The payment can then be invested in funds whose recommended holding period can be very different from one fund to another, and switched between supports. As a result, beyond the reference to the tax horizon, which is based on an 8-year holding period, the policyholder can hold his or her contract for a very long time, as he or she would a securities account, by having switched his or her allocation several times. The approach whereby the costs of the insurance contract or wrapper would be provided in a generic KID (as a single figure) and the costs of the underlying investment option (as a single figure) would be

provided in the specific information document, seems to us the only viable one for MOPs, for the reasons mentioned above.

37. Do you see benefits in an approach where KIDs are prepared for certain investment profiles or standard allocations between different investment options, or for the most commonly selected options? In this case, what type of information could be provided regarding other investment options?

Many multisupport contracts (multi investment vehicles contracts) offer ready-made allocations that can take different forms (standardized portfolio, advised management or collective mandate management). Each of these forms constitutes an investment option under PRIIPs and is therefore already covered by a specific key information document. On the other hand, selecting the most commonly chosen options in the context where the policyholder is free to choose where to invest his or her savings is not desirable: this would lead to present a single UCITS as an investment option where to fully invest one's insurance contract on the grounds that, overall, this UCITS would be one of the most subscribed, whereas investing all the savings in the contract does not constitute a credible allocation choice. Such a document would therefore not be at all illustrative of the allocation choices actually made.

Bearing in mind the idea that an information combining data on the wrapper and data on the underlying options could be expected, at least to make the comprehension of the contract easier for the customer, an example of allocation could be given in the generic document to show the effect of the different charges and how they combine.

38. Do you have any other comments on the preferred approach for MOPs and or suggestions for changes to the requirements for MOPs in the PRIIPs Regulation?

3.10 Alignment between the information on costs in the PRIIPs KID and other disclosures

In the final draft RTS amending the PRIIPs Delegated Regulation submitted to the Commission in February 2021 (and adopted by the Commission on 7 September 2021), the ESAs sought to introduce changes to the way that cost information is presented in the KID, in particular for non-insurance packaged retail investment products (PRIIPs)[1]. One of the aims of these changes is to achieve a better alignment with disclosure requirements in MiFID and IDD.

At the same time, the ESAs have received representations from stakeholders that there might still be inconsistencies or misalignment between the PRIIPs KID and disclosure requirements in other legislative frameworks. This issue is also related to the issue of appropriate differentiation between different types of PRIIPs (see Section 3.7).

Since the issue of consistency between different disclosure requirements for retail investment products is also addressed in the calls for advice to ESMA and EIOPA, the ESAs will, in particular, coordinate the work on this aspect, and consider the appropriate mandate within which to address any issues that arise.

[1] As defined in point (1) of Article 4 of the PRIIPs Regulation

39. Taking into account the proposals in the ESAs' final draft RTS, do you consider that there are still other inconsistencies that need to be addressed regarding the information on costs in the KID and information disclosed according to other retail investor protection frameworks?

In order not to lose its effectiveness, the framework should allow for more consideration of product specificities. The treatment of multi-support savings contracts (multi investment vehicles contracts) in the French market is a good example, since these contracts are essentially defined as a wrapper covering packaged products (euro funds and unit-linked UCITS). Consideration of the functional parallel between this multisupport framework and that of a securities account, which is its non-insurance counterpart, would make it possible to exploit the cross-sectoral dimension of the PRIIPs regulation more fully.

3.11 Other issues

40. Do you think that other changes should be made to the PRIIPs Regulation? Please justify your response.

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