FINANCIAL MARKET PROFESSIONALS

RIS-PRIIPS

COMMENTS ON THE DOCUMENTS PROVIDED BY THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY AT THE SEPTEMBER 2023 WORKING PARTY

As part of the ongoing discussions on the Retail Investment Strategy (RIS), participants at the meeting of the Working Party on Financial Services and the Banking Union¹ (Retail Investment) on 4 and 5 September 2023 were given two notes by the Spanish Presidency of the European Union on the revision of PRIIPs:

- a note in which the Spanish Presidency summarised the written comments received from the various Member States and asked all Member States about their positions (see Annex 1); and
- a note drafted by the German representatives proposing the introduction of a summary indicatorof the sustainability of PRIIPs, which would be used to describe the ESG characteristics of these PRIIPs in the KID (see Annex 2).

The purpose of this document is to respond to the request made by DGT representatives during an exchange with AMAFI on 7 September 2023 to comment on the proposals set out in these papers.

Also attached (<u>see Annex 3</u>) are the amendments drafted in collaboration with the FBF on the PRIIPs regulation, which were sent to the various stakeholders on 17 October 2023.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Generally speaking, AMAFI is not in favour of making sweeping changes to PRIIPs. PRIIPs is one of the most cumbersome texts to implement, given the numerous IT developments required to roll it out. Since it was first adopted in 2018, PRIIPs has undergone constant changes that have necessitated significant upgrades to our members' information systems, the latest being the adoption of version 2 of the RTS in July 2022.

The difficulties encountered by the industry as a result of insufficient attention being paid to the fundamental differences between product categories have now been overcome.

Although AMAFI recognises that some changes are necessary (such as adding a section on sustainability characteristics), it is in favour of minimal changes to a text that, since the adoption of V2 of the Level 2 texts, is proving to be fairly appropriate. For structured products in particular, the KID works well and is understood by investors, as shown by the number of retail customer complaints about KIDs, which remains extremely low.

With regard to the stated desire to move towards greater personalisation of the information provided to the customer, although the changes presented may be interesting from the customer's point of view, this potential should be determined by an in-depth cost-benefit analysis and verified by consumer tests. This interest, which is only potential and the extent of which is not known, must be weighed against the costs that such changes would generate for producers and distributors of financial instruments. The question must be asked about the barriers to entry that such measures could create and, more generally, about theirgeneral usefulness for European markets in terms of the vitality of their players and the diversity of the offer available to investors. Is it

¹ This is one of the preparatory groups for the Council's work.



not the role of competition rather than regulation to encourage certain players to take advantage of digital tools in order to stand out from their competitors? Is it necessary, in the interests of investors, to impose on everyone a level of service that has not been proven to be useful for the customer? In any case, if these measures were adopted, they would represent a radical change in the philosophy of the PRIIPs KID, which was initially designed to be a generic document, with extremely standardised form and content, to ensure maximum comparability between products.

Lastly, AMAFI is strongly opposed to the introduction into PRIIPs of indicators designed to reflect the sustainability of products that would be specific to PRIIPs. The concepts used in all the texts on sustainable finance are already extremely complex and numerous, so it seems totally counterproductive to introduce new ones.

I. COMMENTS ON THE NOTE FROM THE SPANISH PRESIDENCY

The comments set out below follow the outline of the Spanish Presidency's note in Annex 1.

Scope of application

The scope of PRIIPs is currently defined in such a way that it can be considered to encompass all types of bonds.

The newly introduced exemption for bonds with a make-whole clause, while a very positive step forward, is far from encompassing all ordinary bonds (i.e. other than structured bonds), even though the application of PRIIPs to these financial instruments is not relevant and constitutes an obstacle to their distribution (<u>seeletter to the EC and ESMA from several European associations – AMAFI / 23-69</u>), which runs counter to the objectives of the CMU.

The consequence is that, in order to keep their securities out of the scope of PRIIPs, issuers of ordinary bonds choose to exclude retail investors from the distribution of these financial instruments, by means of a sales and/or transfer restriction clause in the prospectus, even though in many cases this exclusion is not justified by the particular characteristics of the financial instrument. Distributors wishing to sell these products to retail clients are therefore faced with additional risks and administrative burdens in extending the positive target market to retail clients.

Furthermore, as these financial instruments may qualify as PRIIPs even though they are ordinary, the absence of a KID is an additional barrier to distribution to retail clients. As a result, these bonds are generally not available to retail investors, restricting retail investors' access to the bond market.

For these reasons, all ordinary bonds should be excluded from the scope of the PRIIPs regulation².

Comprehensibility vs. comparability

AMAFI sees no point in stating that precedence should be given to the principle of comprehensibility over comparability of information in a context where the difficulties encountered by the industry as a result of insufficient consideration of the fundamental differences between product categories have been ironed out in the light of the clarifications that have since been made (notably via PRIIPs RTS V2).

Conversely, the Association sees no difficulty with the principle of comprehensible information being affirmed at level 1, particularly in so far as this could secure the adoption of different approaches for product categories with different characteristics.

² Including when they are issued by financial entites (the draft report by the rappoteur for the RIS package proposes to exclude from the scope of PRIIPs bonds issued by non-financial entities only).



Updating KIDs

The Commission has already clarified, in an FAQ, that the review requirement should not apply to PRIIPs that are no longer marketed, as well as the meaning of "no longer marketed". We see no reason to change this interpretation by adopting a new one, for example at level 1, when the one given in the Commission's FAQ is proportionate and satisfactory. Apart from the fact that this would be a waste of time at a time when many other issues need to be examined, it would run the risk of reopening discussions that could lead to changes in the scope of the PRIIPs regulation with significant operational consequences. In any case, if it is deemed necessary to reopen this issue, it should be done at Level 1 because of the potential magnitude of the consequences of this revision, rather than being left to the ESAs at Level 2.

MOPs

The RIS lays down new obligations for MOPs manufacturers in order to benefit from the derogation, provided for in Article 6.3 of PRIIPs, from the rule requiring all material information to be provided in the KID of the MOP. This derogation allows them to rely on the KIDs of the underlying options³.

AMAFI would like to make the following comments on these new requirements, which would replace those currently in place:

- The requirement for the manufacturer of a MOP to provide a tool for searching and comparing the KIDs of the underlying investment options raises a number of difficulties in terms of :
 - feasibility due to the extremely large universe of underlying options, potentially involving many different manufacturers, with whom processes would need to be developed to access constantly updated information.
 - Who, of the manufacturers of the packaging or of the underlying option, will be liable if the information provided is inaccurate or erroneous?

We therefore propose to delete the paragraph providing for the supply of a tool for comparing the options underlying MOPs.

- We also propose the deletion of the paragraph requiring the envelope manufacturer to provide full cost information before retail investors are bound by any contract, for the following reasons:
 - level 2 already requires manufacturers to provide customers with a range of costs for the different options available in the contract;
 - given the very large number of options generally proposed, obtaining up-to-date and reliable cost information from a potentially large number of PRIIPs manufacturers poses significant operational difficulties and again raises questions in terms of liability.

Personalised information, layering and interactive tools

A thorough cost-benefit analysis of the possibility for customers to access information in a more personalised way must be carried out and verified by consumer testing to ensure that the expected benefits are proportionate to the additional costs incurred.

In any case, a number of problems need to be resolved before such amendments can be adopted:

- There is currently no technological solution that can instantly calculate, for example, the performance or costs of structured products on a customised basis. For these products, determining expected performance requires probabilistic calculations based on a large number of scenarios⁴, which are difficult to carry out instantaneously;
- If solutions were developed, they would inevitably be very expensive, which would be a barrier for small producers and/or distributors;

³ Under the current texts (article 6.3), in order to benefit from this exemption, issuers of MOPs must provide in the KID of the MOP a generic description of the underlying investment options and indicate where and how customers can find additional information on the underlyings

⁴ Usually 10,000 for a classic structured product, according to our members who manufacture this type of product.



- If customers were allowed to simulate different holding periods, the resulting information could be misleading: for example, in the case of autocall products, exiting before the call date would expose customers to unknown costs that would not necessarily be in their interest.
- Giving customers access to such a simulation tool would raise important questions of responsibility between distributors and producers, which should be examined further: who would be responsible for personalised information?

The layering envisaged in paragraph (4) seems to consist of reordering the various sections of the KID, which does not seem to make much sense for a 3-page document that is short enough to be read. It would also require a technology that could be very expensive to develop, with no clear benefit to end customers, as there has been no cost-benefit analysis on this issue.

♣ Section " product at a glance "

AMAFI questions the feasibility of summarising all the important information about a product in a single section (which would be entitled "product at a glance"). Experience shows that concentrating important information about a specific product in a three-page document has already been a major challenge for PRIIPs. Gathering all the important information in an even smaller space without misleading clients due to the necessary simplification seems to be an unachievable goal. Therefore, this requirement should be removed.

Furthermore, such a major change to PRIIPs should not be proposed without a cost-benefit analysis and consumer testing. On the contrary, the European Commission's impact assessment does not show that the current format is considered inadequate by customers and does not include an assessment of the proposed change.

Addition of a section on the sustainability of PRIIPs

It is not acceptable that the ESG criteria to be mentioned in the KID are not identical to those to be assessed under MiFID suitability requirements. This inconsistency between regulatory requirements can lead to retail investors misunderstanding the information provided to them and can create difficulties and complexity in the distribution process. Therefore, we suggest using the terms of ESMA's MiFIDII suitability requirements to define the content of the ESG section of the KID. This will ensure a smooth and consistent distribution process.

Moreover, the scope of PRIIPs is broader than that of SFDRs: AMAFI considers that all PRIIPs with ESG characteristics, whether or not they are SFDRs, should be subject to disclosure requirements, not just those that are SFDRs.

♣ KID length

AMAFI considers that the current 3-page limit on the length of the KID should not be maintained, given the planned addition of a number of items to the KID, including information on the sustainability of products. Nevertheless, AMAFI also draws attention to the importance of keeping the KID in a compact format to ensure that the PRIIPs KID is actually read by retail clients, who are already complaining about the volume of information they receive.

Coming into force

The proposed implementation date is 18 months after the date of entry into force of the regulation. We believe that the trigger date for the 18-month implementation period should be the adoption of the level 2 texts, given the importance of the details to be defined at this level and the very complex structural changes they would entail.



II. COMMENTS ON THE GERMAN PROPOSAL FOR A SINGLE SUSTAINABILITY INDICATOR FOR PRIIPS

AMAFI is strongly opposed to the introduction in PRIIPs of new indicators designed to reflect the sustainability of products.

The concepts used in all the texts on sustainable finance are already extremely complex and numerous, so that it seems totally counterproductive to introduce new ones, especially in a text dedicated to the format of information on financial instruments, which would make no sense.

AMAFI would also be very opposed to the idea of proposing changes to the SFDR regulation via the RIS project, which is already extremely cumbersome and at a time when ESMA has just consulted on possible amendments to the delegated acts and the Commission is currently consulting on the revision of the text, adopting a very open approach to the possible structural changes to be made;





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WORKING DOCUMENT

From: To:	Presidency Working Party on Financial Services and the Banking Union (Retail Investment) Financial Services Attachés
Subject:	Retail Investment Strategy - Presidency non-paper on the proposal for a Regulation amending the PRIIPS Regulation

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RETAIL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Presidency non-paper on the proposal for a Regulation amending the PRIIPS Regulation

1. Introduction

This paper is based on Member States' written comments. It is intended to guide the discussions about the Commission's proposal for amendments to the Regulation No 1286/2014 on key information documents for packaged retail and insurance-based investment products (PRIIPs).

2. Scope of application

A pivotal aspect of the Commission's proposal is the clarification of the Regulation's scope through amendments to Article 2(2).

2.1. Immediate annuities without a redemption phase

Concerns have emerged regarding the clarity of the term "*immediate annuities without a redemption phase*". Some delegations have asked the Commission to provide a justification for the exclusion of these annuities in a recital. The Presidency suggest using the word "accumulation" instead of "redemption", in alignment with the ESAs recommendation.

2.2. Exclusion of non-equity securities issued by non-financial companies.

The Commission's proposal excludes certain types of corporate bonds with make-whole clauses. A few delegations have proposed to enlarge the scope of exclusions. One delegation has argued that, when it comes to non-equity securities issuances by corporations to finance themselves, the administrative burden of producing a KID might discourage distributors to offer non-equity instruments to retail investors, thereby depriving European investors of investment options, a key objective of the Capital Markets Union.

Member States are invited to present their opinions on areas emphasized by the Presidency and on any other issues they deem appropriate:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's proposal with respect to the scope of application.
- b) Whether (and why) they would propose to clarify/adjust the scope.

3. Performance scenarios and information on costs

Under the current rules, past performances may only be provided in a separate document, outside of the KID, for investment funds. The Commission's proposal does not incorporate any amendments on performance scenarios given that the content of the scenarios and the presentation of the KIDs for PRIIPs have been recently amended. However, a few Member States have claimed that manufacturers should provide information on performance that is best suited to the type of product concerned and that this information should be provided in the KID and not in a separate document.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's proposal not to adjust the current approach to performance scenarios.
- b) Whether they would propose to adjust the rules on performance scenarios.

4. Intelligibility versus comparability

A few delegations have expressed support to allow the ESAs to take better into account different types of PRIIPs when drafting RTS. One suggestion was to adapt the ESA's level 2 mandate to include that intelligibility should prevail over comparability to remove the rigidities of the existing Regulation, which would prevent the ESAs from adopting more tailored and specific level 2 methodological approaches for certain families of products. This approach would enhance the usefulness and legibility of KIDs and enable retail investors to better understand the nature of any given financial product and make a better-informed decision.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's approach.
- b) Whether they would propose to adjust the proposal with a view to prioritising intelligibility over comparability by mandating the ESAs to take into account the different categories of financial products when developing RTS.

5. The updating of KIDs

The Commission's proposal establishes that the ESAs shall distinguish between PRIIPs that are still made available to retail investors and PRIIPs that are no longer made available when developing RTS specifying the conditions under which manufacturers shall review the information contained in the KID. Several Member States have argued that updating certain information could generate confusion and higher administrative burden for certain types of products.

5.1. Concept of to make available.

Some Member States have expressed their concerns regarding the term "made available". One delegation has highlighted that 'made available to retail investors' has created many interpretative issues for manufacturers and distributors in its implementation, raising the question of how it relates to definitions used in other EU legal acts (e.g., "sold", "marketed", "offered to retail investors"). Furthermore, another delegation has urged to include extra guidance on the terms 'still made available' and 'no longer made available' included in recital 7 of the proposal, asking whether their interpretation of 'no longer made available by the manufacturer' is consistent across PRIIPs other than investment funds.

Moreover, a few Member States have suggested including a level 1 provision (instead of level 2 measures) to exempt the updating of the KID for certain PRIIPs such as those which are no longer open to new subscriptions and no longer traded on the secondary market.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's approach.
- b) Whether they would propose to further clarify the concept of "made available".
- c) Whether they support the Commission's approach with respect to updating KIDs of PRIIPs that are no longer made available.
- d) Whether they would propose to adjust the proposal with a view to providing certain exemptions or clarifications.

5.2. Coherence between PRIIPs, UCITS and IDD.

Some delegations have warned about the need to ensure consistency and coherence between these three different pieces of legislation.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's approach aimed at ensuring consistency
- b) Whether they would propose to adjust the proposal.

6. Multi-option products (MOPs)

The Commission's proposal introduces several requirements for manufacturers offering a range of options for investments when all information with regard to each investment option cannot be provided within a single, concise stand-alone document.

6.1. Information to be included.

One delegation has pointed out that regardless of the type of KID, the KID should provide the same information. Another delegation has suggested adding the inclusion of information on performances and on the costs of the PRIIP (those relating to the wrapper) that do not relate to its investment options, in order to have a comprehensive view of the total costs. Another delegation has expressed the need to develop draft RTS on this provision.

6.2. Provision of tools to facilitate comparison among the different options.

One delegation has expressed doubts about the scope of this tool (whether it should contain only products that PRIIPS manufacturer's/distributor offer; or a much broader category of insurance products, such as all the products in the market).

Moreover, several Member States have commented that it is not clear whether a financial advisor would assist the investor in the use of the tool or would only intervene after the pre-selection of investment options has been made), and who would be liable for the correctness of the information covered by that tool and the tailored KID.

6.3. Pre-contractual information

Several delegations have flagged that the reference to the "pre-contractual information documentation relating to the investment products backing the underlying investment options" has been maintained, although the ESAs advice highlighted that this reference contained in Article 6(3) would not oblige, per se, to disclose the costs of the insurance contract in the specific information document. For this reason, they would rather incorporate the ESAs drafting proposal, to ensure that the costs of the insurance contract are included only in the specific information document under Article 10 PRIIPs Delegated Regulation.

Additionally, one delegation has asked for clarification on which 'information documentation' the provision refers to (they understand that the investor should receive tailored KIDs based on the investment options she or he has pre-selected via the tool).

6.4. Provision of information upon their request and in good time

A few Member States have expressed their disagreement about providing the complete information on the costs of the PRIIP relating to the investment option upon request of the investor.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's approach with respect to MOPs.
- b) Whether they would propose an alternative approach with a view to clarifying the rules for the presentation of MOPs as well as ensuring consistent application.

7. Electronic format and interactive tools

7.1. Definition of electronic format

The Commission's proposal aims to adapt the disclosures of the KID to the digital environment and to the evolving needs of retail investors. The proposal introduces a definition of 'electronic format' as 'any durable medium other than paper'. One delegation has sent drafting suggestions to ensure that the PDF format is valid, and that the information must be readable by electronic devices only.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

a) Whether they would propose any modification to the definition of 'electronic format'.

7.2. Role of the interactive tools

A few delegations have expressed their concerns on the amendment to allow the electronic format of the KID to be provided by means of an interactive tool (article 14(2)). One delegation has pointed out that the interactive tool may be difficult to implement and will require clear and detailed guidance. One delegation has suggested that the proposal should include a proper definition of "interactive tool".

The Commission's proposal requires the interactive tool to fulfil four-set of requirements for displaying the key information in a personalised manner. A few Member States have expressed their concerns against focusing too much on the cost characteristics of the PRIIP when using digital tools because it may not give a fair view of such products. Another delegation has suggested to put those four requirements as an Annex to the KID to ensure that firms can properly lay out all the required information within the three-page limit.

Some Member States have expressed their concerns about the simulation of costs, as well. In relation to the condition under article 14(2)(d), according to which the interactive tool shall allow investors to simulate costs over the recommended holding period (RHP), some Member States have shown their concerns and need for clarification. One delegation has expressed that personalizing the summary risk indicator based on a holding period that deviates from the recommended one might prove challenging. Another delegation has pointed out that the wording 'simulate costs' seems to imply that the simulated costs would be different from the costs presented in the KID and, if this is not the case, that the wording should be revised to avoid any confusion. There is also one delegation that considers that this level 1 Regulation or even the corresponding level 2, should further specify the criteria for simulation of the costs tool, to ensure that clients are provided with realistic scenarios. One delegation has also asked how this condition relates to the new one under article 14(3)(a) and they request for clarification on whether that condition states that costs can be simulated over a holding period that is different from the RHP. One delegation is of the view that the amendment should clarify the purpose of the cost simulator.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

a) the rules on how to generate personalised information when using interactive tools and the convenience of all those provisions

7.3. Role of the ESAs

Amendments to Article 14(3) of the Regulation contain a mandate by which the ESAs shall develop draft RTS specifying the modalities for personalising the information and the conditions for adapting the information to a layered format. One delegation has pointed out that the additional requirements of accessibility of the information for people with disabilities and the possibility of simulating costs over holding periods other than the recommended holding period shall be included under paragraph 2. Therefore, this delegation has not expressed support for developing further RTS.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

a) the provisions for the layered format and the role of the ESAs

7.4. Accessibility of the KID

The new version of Article 14(6) requires that the KID shall remain accessible on the website of the person advising or selling the PRIIPS and in a format and way that it can be downloaded and stored in a durable medium by the investors as long as they might need to consult it. Where the PRIIP manufacturer has revised the KID, it shall provide the retail investors with previous versions upon request. One delegation has commented that the provision "for such period of time as the retail investor may need to consult it" (already under existing Article 14.5.(d)) is too vague and should be clarified. Another delegation also considers the provision "... shall remain capable of being downloaded and stored in a durable medium, for such period of time as the retail investor may need to consult it." too broad and open-ended.

One delegation has suggested specifically mentioning that the previous versions of the KID shall remain on the website. However, one delegation has pointed that stipulations regarding the availability of all versions of a KID on the website of the person advising on or selling PRIIPs would be difficult to implement due to the large number of documents potentially involved.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

a) The convenience of the provision for the availability of all versions of a KID on the website of the person advising or selling the PRIIPs.

8. Content of the 'Product at a glance' dashboard

The Commission's proposal creates a new section called 'Product at a glance'. On the one hand, several Member States have given support to this idea, but they think that some information is missing such as summarised information about performance scenario or ESG features. On the other hand, quite a few delegations have stated that the benefits for the retail investors might not outweigh the costs of using additional space.

Furthermore, one delegation wonders whether the mandate for the ESAs to develop draft RTS specifying how information can be layered should be made more explicit in the level 1 text. Another delegation has pointed out that, as the sections 'How can I complain?' and 'What happens if the manufacturer is unable to pay out?' are not included in the dashboard, it should be clarified that the first layer could contain more titles than those provided in the dashboard. Also, there is another delegation asking who would be liable in the case of hidden information or in the case that additional

information needs to be provided. They explain that the person who layers the information is the one advising on or selling the PRIIP so that, the liability of the PRIIP manufacturer seems questionable.

As the information to be included in the dashboard should be concise and short, one delegation has also asked for further clarification on the meaning of 'summarised information' when it regards to (i) the type of PRIIP and (iii) the total costs of the PRIIP.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's approach for a summary dashboard ('Product at a glance').
- b) Whether they would propose to clarify/adjust the proposed dashboard approach.

9. Deletion of the comprehension alert

The Commission's proposal removes the 'comprehension alert' it has arguably not been sufficiently effective in warning retail investors against particularly complex products and could have also unintentionally discouraged them from purchasing less complex investment products. One delegation has expressed that they would support such removal but under the inclusion of warnings flagging the risk of investing in specific PRIIPs and the recommendation of seeking for professional advice before undertaking an investment.

On the contrary, another delegation has claimed that the alert should be retained because it is important for investors. Another Member State suggests maintaining this warning when it is relevant only. Finally, one delegation suggests clarifying how the risk warning proposed under Article 29 (5) IDD for IBIPs will differ from the 'comprehension alert'.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's proposal to delete the comprehension alert.
- b) Whether they would propose to keep the comprehension alert.

10. New section 'How environmentally sustainable is this product?'

The Commission's proposal removes from the KID the reference to environmental and social objectives pursued by the investment product in the section 'What is this product?', replacing it by a new section dedicated to sustainability titled 'How environmentally sustainable is this product?'.

Several delegations have expressed their disagreement in introducing this new section. One delegation has pointed out that it would be appropriate to include a reference to where the product manufacturer has published information under Regulation (EU) 2019/2088, Regulation (EU) 2020/852, as well as the delegated acts implementing those Regulations. In addition, such delegation has mentioned the need to bear in mind that when the PRIIP is a UCITS or an AIF unit, there will be some information duplicated as a consequence of Article 2(7) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/653, that requires to include information of the investment strategy and eligible financial assets in the KID 's section 'What is this product?'. Further, this delegation has remarked that the new section will lead to an additional administrative burden for business and supervision, insofar as the information to be disclosed for the 'How environmentally sustainable is this product?' are already included in other pre-contractual documents. Finally, another delegation has emphasized the need to increase consistency with SFDR, thereby, waiting until its forthcoming review.

When it comes to the content of the proposal, a few delegations have commented that the disclosure should not rely only on one metric (the greenhouse gas emissions) but rather adopt a flexible approach

whereby the manufacturer could select one indicator that would be relevant considering the product's features. Further, the expected GHG emissions intensity may not be available for all funds. Moreover, there is one delegation that has suggested referring to 'carbon footprint' pursuant to Delegated Regulation 2022/1288 instead of GHG because the formula for GHG emissions measures the amount of GHG emission and the formula for carbon footprint measures the amount of GHG normalized with the value of all investments. They have also claimed that this would improve comparison of different PRIIPs, and the carbon footprint measure would be better aligned with the calculations for EU climate benchmark and the on-going work with proposal to change SFDR level 2 measures.

Some Member States have also sent additional comments about the information on sustainable matters that currently have to be disclosed in other pre-contractual documents. One Member State has proposed that the KID should include clear guidance to investors on how to identify elements of the information on sustainable topics already set out in detail in such pre-contractual documents. In the same way, another delegation has expressed that it would be beneficial for investors to explicitly mention that this information is only a part of the information that must be disclosed based on SFDR so that, a cross-reference to the full information based on SFDR might be provided for.

Three Member States have pointed out that the sustainability information could be included in the existing 'What is this product?' section - Article 8(3)-point c)- as the sustainability factors are an integral part of the investment process and an essential feature of the product. One of those delegations proposes to combine those two sections or set them out consecutively, one after the other.

Moreover, a few delegations have expressed their support to incorporating social and governance considerations, anticipating the possible future extension of the Taxonomy Regulation. In particular, one delegation has proposed introducing an ESG indicator comparable to the summary risk indicator which would include: ESG factors in general and not only two special ecological factors and, the MiFID and IDD sustainability preferences. This way, the cross-sectoral comparability among PRIIPs would be enhanced, avoiding unjustified divergences in PRIIPs according to the SFDR scope. As an example, they proposed a colour based ESG scale, easy to understand and which details will have to be provided for in the RTS.

Member States are invited to express their views on:

- a) The convenience of creating this section
- b) The inclusion of any adjustments to this section.

11. Length of the KID

Under the current rules (not amended by the proposal), the KID has a 3-page limit. Several Member States have commented that the new dashboard 'Product at a glance' would not bring additional benefits to the investor but duplicate content from other sections, leading to new challenges for the issuers to respect the length of the KID. Another delegation has also expressed that the inclusion of this dashboard, in addition to the new sustainability section (as well as other elements such as information on past performance if supported by most delegations), will probably lead to new challenges for the issuers with respect the 3-page limit. One of those countries also has expressed that such dashboard should be only optional for the new layered KID format.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) The feasibility of the KID's 3-page limit and its compatibility with the new sections included in Article 1(5)(c) of the Commission's proposal.
- b) Specific suggestions to improve this provision as well as to ensure its consistent application.

12. Providing the KID: when and by whom

Before a PRIIP is made available to retail investors, the PRIIP manufacturer shall draw up and publish the document on its website. One delegation suggests that, as in practice it appears that not all PRIIP manufacturers have their own website, Article 5(1) should be amended so that the website where the PRIIPs KID must be made available could also be the website of the manufacturer's group.

Article 13(1) of the PRIIPs Regulation establishes that a person advising on, or selling, a PRIIP shall provide retail investors with the KID in good time before those retail investors are bound by any contract or offer relating to that PRIIP. One delegation considers that, as mystery shopping campaigns have shown, the KID is often handed to the client at a later stage in the commercial process compared to marketing materials consisting of paper documents or electronic format documents. This is why such delegation proposes a new amendment to the PRIIPs Regulation in order to clearly stipulate that the KID should be given to retail investors at the same time as any other market material provided on paper or electronic format. In addition, the person advising on or selling the PRIIPs should have the obligation to explain to the client that the KID is of a different nature than marketing materials.

Member States are invited to present their views on:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's proposal (i.e. no amendment on this point).
- b) Whether they would propose to clarify/adjust the existing text.

13. Entry into force and application

According to the Commission's proposal, the amending Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union and it shall apply 18 months after the date of its entry into force. There are several delegations asking for an extended timeframe. One Member State suggests that the amended Regulation should only begin to apply one year after the publication of the corresponding provisions on level 2. A few Member States call for a longer and more realistic application period, which will allow both ESAs and NCAs to prepare adequately for the tasks, proposing it to be 36 months. One additional delegation supports a 24-month timeframe for entry into force to allow sufficient time to have in place the necessary IT infrastructure. There is one Member State that proposes a timeline of 24 months after the publication of the Regulation or 12 months after the publication of the level 2 rules. Finally, there is also one delegation that refers to their comments on the need to prolong the timeline because of the implementation of the Omnibus Directive.

Member States are invited to present their views on areas:

- a) Whether they support the Commission's proposed timeline.
- b) Whether they would propose to extend the envisaged timeline for the application of the amendment Regulation.



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WORKING DOCUMENT

From: To:	Germany Working Party on Financial Services and the Banking Union (Retail Investment) Financial Services Attachés
N° Cion doc.:	ST 9669 2023 INIT
Subject:	German Non-paper on improving the ESG information for retail investors in the PRIIPs KID

EN

German Non-paper on improving the ESG information for retail investors in the PRIIPs KID

<u>Summary:</u> We welcome the Commission's efforts to integrate comparable and easily available information about the environmental sustainability of a product in the PRIIPs KID. We suggest to introduce an ESG indicator comparable to the existing summary risk indicator (risk-return profile). The German Sustainable Finance Advisory Committee has developed a possible design for the ESG indicator: The ESG scale, with categories ranging from "strong consideration of sustainability preferences" (A) to "non-ESG product" (F). According to the concept of this committee, each category of such an ESG scale should be based on the allocation of sustainable investments according to SFDR and/or Taxonomy definitions.

In its proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EU) No 1286/2014 as regards the modernisation of the key information document, the European Commission proposed to amend a paragraph in Article 8 about a new section in the KID titled "How environmentally sustainable is this product?". In this section PRIIPs manufacterers which fall under the scope of the SFDR shall provide information about the taxonomy-alignement and expected greenhouse gas emissions intensity of the PRIIP.

We welcome the Commission's efforts to integrate comparable information about the environmental sustainability of a product in the PRIIPs KID and acknowledge the intention of the Commission to achieve this on basis of information which can easily be inserted, because the PRIIPs manufacturer has them at his disposal anyway. However, we believe that the Commission's choice of information will only prove useful to a very limited number of retail investors.

Thus, we suggest introducing instead an **ESG indicator** comparable to the summary risk indicator already included in the PRIIPs KID. An ESG indicator following such a logic and providing an easily comprehensible range of sustainability characteristics provides several advantages:

- It could **refer to the MiFID and IDD sustainability preferences**, which would **integrate** the PRIIPs KID better **in the advisory or distribution process**, respectively. Thus, and in contrast to the Commission's proposal, the legislator would **avoid adding new data** which are not already included in those processes. The already very complex requirements for ESG disclosures and ESG advice would not be further complicated.
- Data is available to the PRIIPs manufacterers, **low additional burden**.
- It includes all PRIIPs and thus **secures cross-sectoral comparability**, not creating differences in PRIIPs according to the SFDR scope.
- It includes a broader and more general **range of ESG factors** and not only two special environmental factors.
- As an example, a colour-based ESG scale is easy to understand, as initial consumer testing showed.

Therefore, we propose to amend the following point (ga) in Art. 8(3) instead of the Commission's proposal:

"(ga) under a section titled 'How sustainable is this product?', an ESG indicator which shows to the retail investor at a glance how his or her sustainability preferences in line with the requirements according to Article 54(5) of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/565 and point a of Article 9(2) of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/2359 are met;"

Details have to be provided for in the PRIIPs RTS.

The German Sustainable Finance Advisory Committee, an independent advisory body consisting of high-level representatives from the financial sector, real economy, civil society and research, already has developed a possible design for the ESG indicator: the ESG scale. This ESG scale would build on existing regulations and integrate the information from the SFDR and the Taxonomy Regulation with the requirements of MIFID II/IDD. This approach makes it easier for investors to select a product in line with their preferred degree of sustainability (for more details see Annex below).

The German Sustainable Finance Advisory Committee conducted initial pilot surveys with investment advisors and retail clients. The **surveys showed** that on both sides – advisors and retail clients - there is an **interest in a workable and meaningful ESG scale**. The majority of the **retail clients perceived the scale as understandable and helpful**. The majority also said they would use the scale when making investment decisions.

If the Taxonomy is further amended or if the SFDR is revised, the categories of the ESG scale should be reviewed accordingly.

Annex

<u>Description of the ESG scale</u> developed by the German Sustainable Finance Advisory Committee as an example for an ESG indicator:



Each category should be based on the allocation of sustainable investments according to SFDR and/or Taxonomy definitions and range on a scale from "strong consideration of sustainability preferences" (A) to "non-ESG product" (F).

Products of categories A – D consider sustainable investments and reflect sustainability preferences according to MiFID II/IDD:

- A High proportion of environmentally sustainable investments according to the Taxonomy Regulation and/or "sustainable investments" according to the SFDR and consideration of principal adverse impacts.
- **B** Medium proportion of environmentally sustainable investments according to the Taxonomy Regulation and/or "sustainable investments" according to the SFDR and consideration of principal adverse impacts.
- **C Low proportion** of environmentally sustainable investments according to the Taxonomy Regulation and/or "sustainable investments" according to the SFDR.
- **D** Products that **consider principal adverse impacts** of investment decisions on sustainability factors

Products that cannot reflect sustainability preferences according to MiFID II/IDD should be included in categories E and F:

- Product follows an **ESG strategy and/or ensures transparency on sustainability risks**, yet does not comply with ESG target market under MiFID/IDD.
- **F** Non-ESG product: No data or product is categorised as "not sustainable".

Finally, in coherence with the taxonomy and the SFDR, it should be indicated separately whether the product includes investments in nuclear power or natural gas. Scientific field tests have shown that customers demand this information.

(source: German Sustainable Finance Advisory Committee)





Retail Investment Strategy (RIS)

AMAFI and FBF amendments to Directive (EU) 2014/65/EU and Regulation (EU) 1286/2014

October 2023

AMAFI and FBF amendments to PRIIPs

Some of the PRIIPs' amendments concern the provision of additional information to clients. Although they may be interesting from a consumer point of view, this would need to be ascertained by a thorough cost-benefit analysis and verified through consumer testing. These potential benefits must also be considered against the costs that such amendments would generate for manufacturers and distributors of financial products. The question needs to be asked about the barriers to entry that such measures create and, more generally, about their general usefulness for European markets in terms of the vitality of their players and the diversity of the offering available to investors. Is it not the role of competition rather than regulation to lead certain players to seize digital tools in order to stand out from their competitors? Is it necessary, in the interests of investors, to impose on everyone a level of service that is not proven to be vitally necessary for the client?

Amendment 48 – Scope of the PRIIPS Regulation

Modification to Article 2 of PRIIPS

Current PRIIPs

This Regulation shall not apply to the following products:

(a) non-life insurance products as listed in Annex I to Directive 2009/138/EC:

(...)

(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.

AMAFI and FBF Amendment

This Regulation shall not apply to the following products:

(a) non-life insurance products as listed in Annex I to Directive 2009/138/EC;

 (\ldots)

(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;

(h) any bond, irrespective of its structure, issued for the sole purpose of funding its issuer.

Justification

The scope of PRIIPs is currently defined so that it can be considered as encompassing all types of bonds.

The newly proposed exemption for bonds with make-whole clause, while being a very positive step forward, is far from encompassing all ordinary bonds (i.e. other than structured bonds) for which applying PRIIPs is not relevant and constitute an obstacle to their distribution, which runs contrary to the CMU objectives.

As a result, in order not to fall within the scope of PRIIPs, issuers of ordinary bonds choose to exclude retail investors from the distribution of these financial instruments via a selling or/and transfer restriction clause in the prospectus, while in many cases there is no particular feature related to the financial instrument justifying the exclusion.

Distributors wishing to sell these products to retail clients hence face extra risks and administrative burdens, as these clients may fall outside of the positive target market or in the negative target market. In addition, as these financial instruments may be qualified as PRIIPs even if they are ordinary, the absence of a KID is a further obstacle to the distribution to retail clients.

As a result, these bonds are generally not available to retail investors thereby restricting retail access to the bond market.

For these reasons, all ordinary bonds (including those issued by financial issuers for funding purposes) should be excluded from the scope of the PRIIPs Regulation.

Amendment 49 – Multi Options Products

Proposal for a regulation Article 1 (4) of omnibus regulation modifying Article 6 (3) of PRIIPs

Text proposed by the Commission

AMAFI and FBF Amendment

- 3. By way of derogation from paragraph 2, where a PRIIP offers the retail investor a range of options for investments, such that all information required in Article 8(3) with regard to each investment option cannot be provided within a single, concise stand-alone document, the key information document shall provide a generic description of the underlying investment options, and the costs of the PRIIP other than the costs for the investment option, provided that:
- a) PRIIPs manufacturers provide investors with tools adapted to retail investors that facilitate research and comparison among the different investment options, including on costs;
- b) Retail investors have easy access to the pre-contractual information documentation relating to the investment products backing the underlying investment options
- c) PRIIPs manufacturers provide investors, upon their request and in good time before retail investors are bound by any contract or offer to invest in a given investment option,

3. By way of derogation from paragraph 2, where a PRIIP offers the retail investor a range of options for investments, such that all information required in Article 8(3) with regard to each investment option cannot be provided within a single, concise stand-alone document, the key information document shall provide a generic description of the underlying investment options, and the costs of the PRIIP other than the costs for the investment option, provided that retail investors have easy access to the preinformation contractual documentation relating to the investment products backing the underlying investment options.

the complete costs of the PRIIP relating to this investment option

Justification

The requirement for the MOP manufacturer to provide a tool to search and compare the KIDs of the underlying investment options raises several issues:

- Feasibility issues, due to the extremely wide universe of underlying options, potentially with many different manufacturers, with whom processes will have to be developed to access constantly updated information;
- Liability issues associated with such situations: who, from the wrapper's or the underlying option's manufacturers will be liable in case the information provided is inaccurate or erroneous?

Therefore, we propose to delete paragraph a).

We also propose to delete paragraph c), which requires the manufacturer of the wrapper to provide full information on costs before the subscription of an investment option, for the following reasons:

- the Level 2 already requires manufacturers to provide clients with a range of costs for the different options available in the contract;
- considering the very large number of options usually proposed, obtaining up to date and reliable information on costs from potentially many PRIIPs manufacturers appears very challenging and again raises issues in terms of liabilities.

Amendment 50 - New section "Product at a glance"

Proposal for a regulation Article 1(5) (a) of omnibus regulation adding new (aa) to Article 8 (3) of PRIIPs regulation

Text proposed by the Commission

AMAFI and FBF Amendment

(aa) under a section titled 'Product at a glance' a dashboard with summarised information about all of the following: (i) the type of the PRIIP, as referred to in point (c)(i); (ii) the summary risk indicator referred to in point (d)(i); (iii) the total costs of the PRIIP; (iv) the recommended holding period referred to in point (g)(ii); (v) whether the PRIIP offers the insurance benefits referred to in point (c) (iv);

Deleted.

Justification

AMAFI and FBF are concerned about the feasibility of summarising all important information on the product in a single section (which would be named 'Product at a glance'). Experience shows that concentrating important information on a specific product in a three-page document has already been a major challenge of the PRIIPS Regulation. Gathering all important information in such a tight space without misleading clients due to the simplification needed seems an unachievable goal. Therefore, this requirement should be deleted.

Moreover, such a major change to PRIIPs should not be put forward without any proper cost-benefit analysis and consumer testing. On the contrary, the European Commission's impact assessment does not show that the current format is considered inadequate by clients and does not include an assessment of the change proposed.

Amendment 51 – ESG disclosures

Proposal for a regulation – New sustainability disclosures in the KID Article 1(5) (d) of omnibus regulation adding new (ga) to Article 8 (3) to PRIIPs regulation

Text proposed by the Commission

- (ga) for PRIIPs on which financial market participants are to disclose pre-contractual information pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Commission Delegated Regulation 2022/1288, under a section titled 'How **environmentally** sustainable is this product?', the following information:
- (i) the minimum proportion of the *investment* of the PRIIP that is associated with economic activities that qualify as environmentally sustainable in accordance with Articles 5 and 6 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- (ii) the expected greenhouse gas emissions intensity associated with the PRIIP pursuant to Delegated Regulation 2022/1288;

AMAFI and FBF Amendment

- (ga) for PRIIPs on which financial market participants are to disclose pre-contractual information pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Commission Delegated Regulation 2022/1288, or which are marketed with sustainability characteristics, under a section titled 'How sustainable is this product?', the following information:
- (i) The minimum proportion of the *PRIIP* that is invested in environmentally sustainable investments as defined in Article 2 (1) of Regulation (EU) 2020/85230 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- (ii) The minimum proportion of the PRIIP that is invested in sustainable investments as defined in Article 2 (17) of Regulation (EU) 2019/208831;
- (iii) Which principal adverse impacts (PAI) on sustainability factors are considered by the PRIIP, including quantitative or

qualitative criteria demonstrating that consideration;

- (iv) Whether, where relevant, the PRIIP has a focus on either environmental, social or governance criteria or a combination of them.
- (gb) Multi-Option Products (MOPs) which offer a range of options for investments, should not contain the section "How sustainable is this product?"

Justification

It is not acceptable that the ESG criteria to be mentioned in the KID are not identical to the ones to be assessed under the MiFID suitability requirements. This inconsistency between regulatory requirements may cause retail investors to misunderstand the information they are provided with and may create difficulty and complexity in the distribution process. Therefore, we suggest using the terms of the ESMA's guidelines on MiFID II product governance to define the content of the ESG section of the KID. This will guarantee a smooth and consistent distribution process.

The scope of PRIIPs is wider than the one of SFDR: AMAFI and FBF consider that all PRIIPs with ESG characteristics, either falling under SFDR or not, should be subject to the disclosure requirements, not only those that are in scope of SFDR.

Moreover, it should be anticipated that the 3-page limit for the KID's format will have to be softened as a consequence of this new requirement.

For MOPs, because the sustainable characteristics may vary completely depending on the rebalancing of the portfolio on the various investment options, the sustainability section in the KID should not be required.

Amendment 52 – KID review

Proposal for a regulation Article 1 (6) of omnibus regulation modifying Article 10 (2) of PRIIPs

Text proposed by the Commission

AMAFI and FBF Amendment

- Committee, develop draft regulatory technical standards specifying:
- (a) the conditions for reviewing the (a) the conditions for reviewing the information information contained in the key information contained in the key information document; document:
- 2. In order to ensure consistent application of 2. In order to ensure consistent application of this this Article, the ESAs shall, through the Joint Article, the ESAs shall, through the Joint Committee, develop draft regulatory technical standards specifying:

- (b) the conditions under which the key information document must be revised, distinguishing between PRIIPs that are still made available to retail investors and PRIIPs that are no longer made available [...]
- (b) the conditions under which the key information document must be revised,

(e) The ESAs shall take into account situations where a PRIIP is no longer made available to retail investors. The ESAs shall submit those draft regulatory technical standards to the Commission by [one year after date of entry into force of this amending Regulation].

(e) The ESAs shall submit those draft regulatory technical standards to the Commission by [one year after date of entry into force of this amending Regulation].

Justification

[...]

The Commission has already clarified in a Q&A that the review requirement should not apply to KIDs that are no longer marketed, as well as the meaning of the terms "no longer marketed". Therefore, we see no reason to change this interpretation, which the industry considers satisfactory. It would be a waste of time whereas many other issues need to be tackled. Moreover, and more importantly, if this interpretation was to be changed, its impact on the scope of the PRIIPS Regulation could be significant, warranting that this issue should be addressed at Level 1 rather than at Level 2 by the ESAs.

Amendment 53 – Digitalisation of KIDs, layering, and personalised information Proposal for a regulation Article 1(7) of omnibus regulation replacing Article 14 of PRIIPs Article 14 (2), (3) and (4) of PRIIPs are modified as follows:

Text proposed by the Commission

AMAFI and FBF Amendment

(2) The electronic format of the key information document may be provided by means of an interactive tool that enables the retail investor to generate personalised key information based on the information in the key information document or the information underlying it.

That tool shall respect the following conditions:
(a) thee interactive tool, or its use, shall not alter the understanding of the key information document; (b) all key information shall be presented; (c) the key information document shall be easily accessible through a link next to the interactive tool, and the link shall be accompanied by the following message "It is

(2) The electronic format of the key information document may be provided by means of an interactive tool that enables the retail investor to access intelligent customisable searching functionalities on the PRIIPs KID.

That tool shall respect the following conditions: (a) thee interactive tool, or its use, shall not alter the understanding of the key information document; (b) all key information shall be presented; (c) the key information document shall be easily accessible through a link next to the interactive tool, and the link shall be accompanied by the following

recommended to download and store the key information document"; (d) the interactive tool shall allow investors to simulate costs over the recommended holding period. Where the key information document is provided accordance with the first subparagraph, its format may be adapted compared to the presentation of the key information document referred to in Article 8.

(3) The ESAs shall develop draft regulatory technical standards specifying the modalities for personalising the information as referred to in the first subparagraph of paragraph 2, and the conditions for adapting the formatting of the information, as referred to in the second subparagraph of paragraph 2.

In addition to the modalities referred to in the first subparagraph, the regulatory technical standards shall include the conditions for personalising the key investor information in the following manners:

- the conditions for personalising the information to allow investors to simulate costs over a holding period that is different from the recommended holding period;
- the conditions for personalising the information to allow investors to compare different PRIIPs;
- the conditions for personalising the information to make it accessible to persons with disabilities.

(4) The key information document may be Deleted. presented in a layered format. In that case, the dashboard referred to in Article 8(3)(a') shall appear in the first layer.

message "It is recommended to download and store the key information document".

Such tool should be considered as a service quality enhancement for the purpose of Article 24(9) of Directive EU/2014/65/EU.

Where the key information document is provided in accordance with the first subparagraph, its format may be adapted compared to the presentation of the key information document referred to in Article 8.

Deleted.

Justification

A thorough cost-benefit analysis of the possibility for clients to access information in a more personalised manner needs to carried out and verified through consumer testing to ensure that the expected benefits are commensurate with to the additional costs involved.

Anyhow there are a number of issues that should be solved before such amendments could be successful:

There is currently no technological solution that allows instant calculation of, for example, performance or costs for structured products. For these products, determining expected

- performances requires probabilistic calculations based on a very large number of scenarios;
- If some solutions were developed, they would inevitably be very costly, which would be a barrier for smaller distributors;
- If clients were allowed to simulate different holding periods, the resulting information could be misleading to them: for example, in the case of autocall products, exiting before the call date would expose customers to unknown costs which would not necessarily be in their interests.
- Giving clients access to such a simulation tool would raise important liability issues between distributors and manufacturers that should be explored further: who would be responsible for the personalised information?
- The layering in paragraph (4) seems to consist of reordering the different sections of the KID, which does not seem to make much sense for a 3-page document that is sufficiently short to be read and requires a technology could be very costly to develop, without any expected clear benefit to the end clients, as there has been no cost-benefit analysis of this issue.

Therefore, FBF and AMAFI propose to delete paragraph (3) and (4) of Article 14. It is also suggested to amend paragraph (2) by limiting the functionalities available to clients under new interactive tools to access intelligent customisable searching functionalities on the PRIIPs KID. It is also proposed to clarify that the provision of such tools should be viewed as enhancing the quality of service provided to clients.

Amendment 54 – Entry into force

Proposal for a regulation Article 2 of omnibus regulation is modified as follows:

Text proposed by the Commission

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. It shall apply from [PO please insert the date = 18 months after the date of entry into force of this amending Regulation]

AMAFI and FBF Amendment

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. It shall apply from [PO please insert the date = 18 months after the date of entry into force of the delegated acts required under this Regulation.

Justification

The proposed application date is 18 months after the date of entry into force of the regulation. We consider that the trigger date for the 18 months implementation delay should be the adoption of Level 2 given the importance of the details to be defined at this level and the highly complex and structural changes that they would trigger.