

New survey reveals European individual investors' growing interest but limited investment in SRI

Conducted by Kantar on behalf of BNP Paribas Asset Management ('BNPP AM') for a second successive year, the survey¹ reveals European individual investors' attitudes towards socially responsible investment (SRI). The survey, conducted in December 2018 during the COP 24 conference, polled 5,000 individual investors in Germany, Belgium, France, Italy and the Netherlands², each with assets of more than €50,000. It found that:

- European individual investors' awareness of, and interest in, SRI rose by 5% from a year earlier
- 64% of investors are willing to invest at least part of their savings in SRI funds
- Actual investment remains low: just 5-7% of investors have invested in SRI funds (7% in France)
- 46% of respondents would like more information about SRI from their financial advisors

Sustainable investment has considerable potential in Europe

The survey shows that most individual investors in Europe are aware of the value of sustainable investment:

- 64% say they want to invest in sustainable solutions (80% in Italy, 65% in Germany, 63% in Belgium, 57% in France and 52% in the Netherlands)
- 46% want more information about SRI. Demand is strongest in Italy (65%), Germany (55%) and France (41%), but far less so in the Netherlands (31%) and Belgium (39%), where individual investors appear more sceptical.

Security and performance remain the most important criteria in investment decisions

The key criteria in investment decisions vary little from country to country, but **security** (for 31%) and **performance** (for 30%) are by far the most prominent.

- Criteria such as the ethical, social and environmental characteristics of investments (16%) are still considered non-critical.
- Within sustainable investment, **environment and climate issues** are the most important criteria (for 28% of respondents), ahead of social (15%) and food (10%).

International events such as COP 24 have limited influence on investor behaviour

- Most individual investors (70%) are familiar with international climate change events, such as COP 24, due to widespread media coverage. Such events tend to have an impact on investors' awareness of the challenges faced, albeit to a limited extent.
- Such events have an impact on consumer behaviour (34% of respondents) and on the environmental outlook (23%), but very little impact on investment behaviour (only 9%).

- Continued scepticism about SRI performance

The survey also found that European investors remain sceptical about the potential performance of SRI investments.

- Only 19% believe that SRI can offer returns equivalent to those of traditional investments (11% in the Netherlands, 24% in Italy, 21% in France, 20% in Germany, and 17% in Belgium).

¹ The Attitude Towards SRI in Europe, Kantar, December 2018. All data referenced in this press release is sourced from this survey.

² 1,000 investors surveyed in each country.



- **Lack of information seems to be one of the major obstacles.** 46% of European investors consider financial advisers to be the most expert source of information, although they receive the majority of it through the media (57%).

Emmanuel Collinet de la Salle, Head of Commercial Development for Wealth Management and Retail Networks at BNP Paribas Asset Management, comments,

"The growth outlook for sustainable investment is considerable and we have seen a significant increase in demand. However there is still a long way to go to re-orient individual investors' thinking towards a more SRI-focused approach and to explain how they can contribute to a better future through SRI investment. The need to build a sustainable world is now more urgent than ever before. In line with our Global Sustainability Strategy, launched in March, we will continue to promote SRI solutions and to educate our clients and our distribution networks within the BNP Paribas Group, in particular with regard to performance."

BNPP AM has already established a number of initiatives among the financial advisors within its European networks, as well as with individual investors, to increase their interest in SRI and equip them with a better understanding of it. These include a carbon footprint calculator developed in co-operation with the GoodPlanet Foundation, a virtual reality SRI movie to raise awareness of climate change, and an app ('Investo') that combines theoretical knowledge with real-life situations to teach about financial savings using an SRI model.

[Click here for the full survey findings.](#)

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About BNP Paribas Asset Management

BNP Paribas Asset Management is the asset management arm of BNP Paribas, one of the world's foremost financial institutions, and offers high value-added solutions to individual savers, companies, and institutional investors. It has a broad range of skills in four investment divisions: Equities, Fixed Income, Private Debt & Real Assets, and Multi-Asset, Quantitative and Solutions (MAQS). Sustainability is at the heart of BNP Paribas Asset Management's strategy and investment decision-making process, making an active contribution to energy transition, environmental protection and the promotion of equality and inclusive growth. Its aim is to achieve long-term sustainable investment returns for its clients. BNP Paribas Asset Management has assets under management of EUR 421 billion* (as at 31 March 2019), with more than 530 investment professionals and almost 500 client servicing specialists, serving individual, corporate and institutional clients in 69 countries.

* EUR 565 billion of assets under management and advisory as of 31 March 2019

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