

Press release

Paris, 26 September 2016

The French and SRI (Socially Responsible Investment) Results of the 7th national survey run by Ipsos for Vigeo Eiris and the FIR

What is the level of knowledge and interest of French people in SRI? What are the key trends and new challenges linked to such investment in 2016?

The answers are revealed in the latest survey conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Vigeo Eiris, the international research and ESG agency (Environment, Social and Governance) and the FIR (The Forum for Responsible Investment) for the seventh consecutive year.

The national yearly survey was conducted online between August 26th and 29th 2016 with a sample of 1,101 adults 16-75 in France. After applying a first filter, questions related to SRI were only considered by individuals owning at least one financial product, resulting in 86% of the original sample, around 951 adults aged 16-75

The main results of the survey underline that:

- **French adults who own financial products are largely in favour of integrating environmental and social issues in their investment decisions (51%).**
- **More than 80%** of the 1,101 respondents interviewed believe that climate issues and the energy transition challenge should be included in financial institutions' investment decisions. **49% are in favour of** integrating them into their own investment choices.

Despite these encouraging figures,

- **The SRI concept remains unknown to the general public: 66% of respondents declared they had never heard of SRI before the survey** (compared with 67% in 2015). This figure is however reduced to 58% for the holders of life insurance (418 respondents), to 53% for the holders of employee savings (161 respondents), and to 48% for those investing in the stock market (418 respondents).
- The SRI product offering is not really promoted by financial institutions: **only 4% of respondents who own a financial product have been offered SRI products by their financial institution** (compared with 3% last year). This figure is slightly higher for employee savings: 9% have been offered SRI products in 2016.

- While nearly one French financial product holder out of three does not trust his or her financial service provider (32%), SRI could represent a lever for increasing trust in banks and insurance providers. This figures increases at 64% for individual investors declaring that they know precisely what's meant by the concept of SRI precisely and at 52% for those who have only a general knowledge.
- **40% of French people consider their financial advisor to be** the most appropriate person to inform them about responsible investment, followed by NGOs and consumer groups (16%), **public authorities** (15% of the respondents' choice), the media (14%), family and friends (13%) and companies (2%).
- **Almost one third of the people surveyed consider that the existence of a label** about savings products, accredited by the state, could be a determining factor in choosing SRI products.

Florence Bihour-Frezal, Southern Europe & Africa Regional Sales Director of Vigeo Eiris stated "Despite an undeniable increase in the consideration of ESG factors in investment decisions by institutional investors, the weak link remains an offer insufficiently promoted to individual investors."

Grégoire Cousté, Delegate-General – FIR adds: "This year, the launch of the SRI and TEEC labels (Energy and Ecological Transition for climate) sheds a new light on some of the key issues disclosed by the 2016 survey, including the promotion of SRI towards individual savers."

A presentation providing more details on the main results of the survey is available [here](#).

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Notes to editors

- A. The National Online Consumer Survey was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of research organisation Vigeo Eiris and the FIR, to gauge current awareness of and interest in SRI products among French consumers, identify the importance that they give to environmental and social criteria in their investment choices, and identify current motivations and barriers to investing. A sample of 1101 French aged between 16 and 75 years responded to the online survey from across France. Amongst the original sample, a first filter was applied to survey only those owning at least one financial product, resulting in a final sample of 950 retail investors (“respondents”) or 86% of the original sample. Fieldwork was conducted using an online method and took place between 26th and 29th of August 2016. Data have been weighted to be representative of current demographic trends.
- B. The professional training programme on socially responsible investment is a project to create a training program on SRI for financial advisors, banking advisors and wealth management advisors. A European project, this training programme is being developed in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom by nine partners from these different countries. All are specialists in responsible investment and are contributing their knowledge of the development of this form of asset management in each of these countries to the programme. In France, the FIR has joined forces with Novethic to promote the training program to financial institutions and their advisors.
- C. Under the patronage of the French Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy and the Ministry of Finance and Public Accounts, the sixth French SRI Week (www.semaine-isr.fr) is organised by the Forum for Responsible Investment (Forum pour l'Investissement Responsable). The SRI Week allows all, members of the public as well as professionals, to better understand Socially Responsible Investment, its aims, its methods, and the issues surrounding it through Socially Responsible Investment themed events taking place during one week everywhere in France.
- D. Vigeo Eiris is a global provider of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) research to investors and corporates. Formed from the merger of Vigeo and EIRIS in December 2015, Vigeo Eiris provides research and solutions for sustainable value creation. Vigeo Eiris offers two types of services through separate business units. Vigeo Eiris rating, utilizing its teams' expertise and its unique and well-regarded methodologies, offers a large range of products and services designed for investors and asset managers engaged in sustainable and responsible investment practices. This research covers more than 4,000 ESG issuers and up to 10,000 with controversial weapons. Vigeo Eiris enterprise works with organizations of all sizes, from all sectors, public and private, to support them in their CSR measures and their valorisation. Visit www.eiris.org and www.vigeo.com
- E. The FIR is a French multi stakeholder association whose mission is to promote SRI, Socially Responsible Investment. The FIR brings together all parts of the SRI value chain: investors, asset management firms, brokers, non-financial rating agencies, investment advisors, trade associations and trade unions. The FIR organises the SRI Week. In 2010, the FIR launched Cordial, a platform for dialogue between listed companies on sustainable development questions. The FIR is, together with the AFG – the French Asset Management Association – and Eurosif, one of the creators of the Transparency Code. The FIR is a founding member of Eurosif. www.frenchsif.org.