**4.1 Annex I – Summary of questions**

**Q1: What are the key reasons why many retail savers choose not to invest in capitalmarkets and instead keep their savings in bank deposits? *Please explain and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

The main reason why many savers do not invest in the capital market and instead keep their money in banks is a lack of financial education. This results in a lack of knowledge about the opportunities offered by the market, as well as risk aversion. People prefer 'safe' and well-known banking products (such as accounts and deposits), even if it means losing money to inflation. At the same time, banks rarely encourage customers to invest. If they do, it is usually through advertising their own expensive and limited mutual fund offerings (they lack simple, low-cost instruments such as life-cycle funds).

**Q2a: To what extent do retail investors find investment products too complex or difficultto understand? *Please select one of the following options and please explain and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**•** A major barrier to investment• A moderate concern, but not the main factor

Many people find financial products complicated, but their design is not the only factor that deters investment. Other important factors include risk tolerance (linked to the level of financial education), the complexity of the tax system, and trust in the state to protect savings and investments against fraud and theft.

**•** A minor issue compared to other factors **•** Not a concern at all

**Q2b: For consumer associations: Based on your interaction with retail investors, arethere particular types of investment products or product features that retail investorsfind especially difficult to understand? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or
evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Examples of very complex financial products include structured deposits and insurance products with an investment component. These products are offered by institutions that enjoy a high level of trust, such as banks and insurance companies, and this makes them a more popular choice than stocks, bonds or ETFs for some people.

In recent years, knowledge of how ETFs work has spread, which is crucial for individual investors. However, this knowledge is still not widespread.

Similarly, savers' knowledge of cryptocurrencies is also low. This often does not deter people from investing, due to the strong desire to profit from price fluctuations.

**Q3: Do past experiences with low or negative returns significantly affect retail investors’willingness to invest again? *Please select one of the following options and please explain
and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

• Yes, negative experiences strongly discourage future investment

Yes, losses can deter further investment, particularly among those with low financial literacy. They are often not sufficiently aware that the market can experience strong declines at any time. However, this does not change the fact that, in the long term, the stock market provides positive returns and is an attractive way to build long-term savings.

 **•** Somewhat, but other factors (e.g., trust, risk appetite) play a bigger role **•** No, past experiences with poor returns are not a major factor in investor decisions

**Q4a: Do high fees and costs discourage retail investors from participating in capitalmarkets? *Please select one of the following options and please explain and provide practical
examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

• Yes, fees are a major obstacle to investment

Yes, high costs can discourage investment. This has been evident in Poland in recent years. Reducing foreign investment fees (while expanding the range of services offered by financial companies) has led to a significant increase in investment outside the Warsaw Stock Exchange.

High costs mainly deter informed investors because those with limited knowledge may consider fees of 2–4% of asset value per year to be low (although they are not). This is evident in the Polish mutual fund market, which charges some of the highest fees in the EU.

 **•** Somewhat, but investors consider other factors as well **•** No, fees are not a significant concern for most retail investors

**Q4b: For consumer associations: Do retail investors raise specific concerns aboutinvestment costs and fees? If yes, which ones? (e.g., are total costs clearly known byindividual investors? Are fees perceived as too high? Are they considered unclear ordifficult to compare? Do investors feel they get good value compared to the cost?) *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where
available.***

*Investors pay close attention to the various types of fees and seek information on total costs. They consider fees to be too high and expect financial companies to compete on price. Activity fees (e.g. order execution) are more widely accepted than fixed fees (e.g. account maintenance, asset custody).*

*As the total costs associated with investing are difficult for a single investor to compare, rankings are popular. However, some of these rankings are created by entities funded by investment companies, which reduces their credibility.*

**Q5a: Have you identified a lack of trust in investment service providers as a factorinfluencing retail investors’ reluctance to invest? *Please select one of the following options
and please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where
available.***

**•** A major factor **•** A contributing factor, but not the main issue• A minor factor compared to other concerns **•** Not a factor at all

**Q5b: For consumer associations: What specific concerns, if any, do retail investorsraise about investment service providers? (e.g., do they feel they receive biased advice?Are there concerns about transparency, trust, or conflicts of interest, or insufficientaccess to advice tailored to their needs?) *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

The biggest concern is the potential conflict of interest between investment companies and individual investors. This applies in cases such as the market maker model or the issuance of investment recommendations.

The security and free access of funds is also a concern. Investors are reacting to reports of cybercrime and failures at investment companies.

**Q6: Do retail investors feel they have adequate access to investment advice andrelevant information when they encounter difficulties in understanding investmentproducts? If not, what forms of support would be most helpful? *Please explain and
provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q7: Does investment advice provided to retail clients typically cover all types ofinvestment products (e.g. shares, bonds, investment funds, ETFs), or are certainproducts rarely advised? If so, please explain which types of instruments are lesscommonly recommended and why. *Please explain and provide practical examples, or
evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

No, the advice provided by sellers of financial instruments mostly applies to the products they offer.

**Q8a: To what extent does a lack of financial education or investment knowledgecontribute to retail investors’ reluctance to invest in capital markets? *Please select one
of the following options and please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn
from experience, where available.***• A major barrier to investment

A lack of financial education is a major barrier to investment. Many people have not learned the principles of financial management either at home or at school. They associate the capital market with risks that they cannot manage and are afraid of.

 **•** A contributing factor, but not the main issue **•** A minor factor compared to other concerns **•** Not a factor at all

**Q8b: For consumer associations***:* **Based on your interactions with retail investors, whatare the most common knowledge gaps that affect their ability to make investmentdecisions? Are there specific topics where more financial education could improveengagement? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from
experience, where available.***

The opportunities offered to individual investors by the capital market.

Investment risk management and the risk of not investing.

Investing small amounts

Investing without consuming a lot of time

Managing personal finances

Principles of investing in the capital market

Opportunities for long-term investment for retirement.

**Q9: For consumer associations: Based on your interactions with retail investors, dopsychological or cultural factors – such as fear of losing money, distrust in financialmarkets, or a preference for familiar products – play a role in retail investors’ hesitationto invest? If so, which of these factors seem most important? *Please explain and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Yes. Fear of losing money and lack of knowledge of financial products play the biggest role.

**Q10: Are there any other significant non-regulatory barriers that discourage retailinvestors from investing in capital markets? *Please explain and provide practical
examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

In some cases, the situation in the financial markets is to blame, for example during periods of strong asset price fluctuations.

In other cases, it is a lack of trust in financial and state institutions, for example in the event of a scandal.

It is always related to the level of financial education.

**Q11: What role do digital platforms and mobile applications play in shaping the investorjourney? Are there digital features or tools that have simplified the investment processor improved investor understanding and decision-making? Conversely, are thereaspects that may complicate the experience for some retail investors? *Please explain
and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Digital platforms and mobile apps have made investing simpler and more accessible. Investors are eager to use them. The biggest complications arise from the need for financial firms to comply with regulations, such as during the registration process, as well as from failures.

**Q12: How effective do retail investors find the current mechanisms for filing complaintsand obtaining redress when issues arise with investment products or services? Doissues with these mechanisms play a role in retail investors’ hesitation to invest? If yes,which improvements can be made? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or
evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Those who are already investing expect an improvement in the level of processing of their complaints. However, this topic is not a major factor that discourages investment.

**Q13: What measures - whether market-driven or policy-driven - could help improve retailinvestor participation in capital markets? *Please explain and provide practical examples,
or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Reducing taxes on capital gains, including dividends

Financial education

Fighting fraud

Reducing the cost of investing

Prompt enforcement of existing regulations

Simplification of procedures (e.g., registration of new clients)

Significant improvements in the functioning of the judiciary (time for processing cases, greater competence of judges in capital market and financial market cases)

**Q14a: Do you believe that young investors are more attracted to speculative and volatilemarkets (e.g., cryptocurrencies) rather than traditional investments (e.g. investmentfunds)? If yes, what are the main reasons for this? *Please select one or more of the***

 ***following options and please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from
experience, where available.***

• The expectation of high returns **•** The perception of lower costs (e.g., no management fees, low transaction costs)• The ease of access and fewer entry barriers compared to traditional investments **•** A preference for decentralised, non-intermediated investments **•** Influence from social media and online communities **•** Distrust in traditional financial institutions and advisers **•** Other (please specify)

**Q14b: For consumer associations: Based on your interactions with young investors,what factors most strongly influence their decision to invest in speculative and volatileassets like cryptocurrencies over traditional investment products? Are there particularexpectations, misconceptions, or marketing tactics that play a key role? Do any of thefollowing sources play a role in shaping young investors’ decisions? *Please select one
or more of the following options and please explain and provide practical examples, or
evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**•** Specialised journals and periodicals• Finfluencers
• AI-generated recommendations
• Educational content from national competent authorities (e.g. podcasts, videos, social
media)
**•** Other (please specify)

**Q15a***:* **MiFID II disclosure requirements aim to provide transparency and supportinformed investment decisions. In practice, do you believe these disclosures arehelping retail investors engage with capital markets, or are there aspects - such asvolume, complexity of content, lack of comparability, or format - that may reduce theireffectiveness? *Please explain your reasoning and provide practical examples, or evidence
drawn from experience, where available.*Q15b***:* **For consumer associations: Have retail investors reported difficulties in usingMiFID II disclosures to support their investment decisions? Are there specific areas(e.g., costs, risks, product features) where excessive or unclear information makesinvesting more difficult? Have you observed issues with the presentation or format, orcomparability, of disclosure materials that may affect how well investors engage withthe information? Which disclosures (which specific information) do you considergenuinely necessary, regardless of specific legal requirements under MiFID II or othersectoral legislation? Would alternative formats (such as visual aids or summaries)improve comprehension and decision-making? *Please explain your reasoning and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q15c***:* **For firms: Have firms observed cases where retail investors disengage or hesitateto invest due to the volume, complexity, or presentation of disclosures? If so, what arethe main factors contributing to this? Which disclosures and contractual documents dofirms consider genuinely necessary, regardless of specific legal requirements underMiFID II or other sectoral legislation? *Please explain your reasoning and provide practical
examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q16a: Do retail investors find the PRIIPs KID helpful in understanding investmentproducts? *Please provide details notably on the elements that are the most helpful and on
ways to improve them. If not, are there alternative ways to protect retail investors that could be
considered, while not increasing the volume of required disclosures.***

These documents are helpful, but not all investors use them.

Investors have trouble properly interpreting the information on total investment costs and the scenarios in these documents (maximum loss, etc.).

**Q16b For consumer organisations: Based on your experience, are PRIIPs KIDs madeeasily accessible to retail investors – for example, are they clearly available on firms’websites or other relevant channels? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or
evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

These documents are available on the websites of investment companies.

**Q17***:* **For firms: Do you measure investor engagement with KIDs and digital disclosures(e.g., click-through rates, reading time, or interactive tools)? Are these available informats adapted to mobile-first environments? *Please explain your reasoning and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q18: Do retail investors find the costs and charges disclosures helpful in understandingthe costs of investing? *Please provide details notably on the disclosures that are the most
helpful (e.g., total costs, illustration of cumulative effect of costs on return) and on ways to
improve them.* If not, are there alternative ways to protect retail investors that could beconsidered while not increasing the volume of required disclosures?**

**Q19: Do firms apply layering of information on costs on charges on digital platforms orin mobile applications (e.g., by showing only the total amount and percentage on theorder screen, and all required information in a PDF)? *Please provide details, also on the
appreciation of retail investors of this application of layering.***

**Q20: Do retail investors find the quarterly statements helpful in keeping track of theirinvestments? *Please select one of the following options and please explain and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**•** Yes, it provides clear and relevant information **•** Somewhat, but the frequency could be lower• No, the information is usually readily available to the retail investor online and thus the
statements do not have much added value **•** Mixed views (please elaborate)

**Q21a: Do retail investors find the information on every 10% depreciation of leveragedinstruments, or the portfolio value in case of portfolio management, helpful in keepingtrack of their investments? *Please select one of the following options and please explain
and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**•** Yes, it provides timely and relevant information **•** Somewhat, but the trigger for sending the information could be improved (e.g., whenthe performance of the portfolio is x% worse than the benchmark, if a benchmark hasbeen agreed)• No, this information may arrive at a moment of temporary market stress, triggering
impulse-driven investment decisions at the wrong time. **•** Mixed views (please elaborate)

**Q21b: If considered necessary, how could the 10% loss reporting be improved?**

**Q22: To what extent do questions and measures on customer due diligence inaccordance with AML/CFT requirements create barriers that prevent retail clients tostart investing? *Please select one of the following options and please explain and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**•** A major barrier to investment **•** A contributing factor, but not the main issue• A minor factor compared to other concerns **•** Not a factor at all

**Q23: Do questions and measures on customer due diligence in accordance withAML/CFT requirements affect the onboarding experience for retail investors? Are thereparticular steps in the process that cause delays or confusion? *Please explain and
provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Investors don't understand why they have to answer these questions. Each successive registration step creates frustration and discourages investment. Moreover, investors who lack the necessary knowledge can easily find the answers to the survey questions online. AI tools, for example, can be particularly helpful in this regard. Consequently, the survey will not achieve its desired effect.

**Q24: For firms and trade associations: to what extent do national tax regimes createbarriers to offering investment services and attracting retail investors on a cross-borderbasis? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience,
where available.***

**Q25: To what extent do tax-related issues discourage retail investors from investing ininvestment products issued or manufactured in another Member State? *Please explain
and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Tax issues discourage investment in other member countries. Investors believe that settling taxes on foreign investments on their own will be time-consuming. They also fear being penalised for mistakes.

**Q26: For consumer organisations: Based on your interactions with retail investors, dothey experience information overload when making investment decisions? If so, whatare the main sources of this overload? Do regulatory disclosures, marketing materialsand contractual documents support investor understanding, or do they contribute tothe confusion? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from
experience, where available.***

**Q27: For consumer organisations: Are there specific examples where the wayinformation is presented – whether in regulatory disclosures, contractual agreements,or marketing material – makes it difficult for investors to focus on key elements suchas costs, risks, or the nature of the service? With regard to marketing material, is thefragmentation of information across different documents or channels a material issuethat affects investors’ ability to fully understand what they are buying? *Please explain
and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q28: For firms and trade associations: Which steps do firms take to make investmentservice agreements (contracts) more accessible and understandable to retail investors? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where
available.***

**Q29: To what extent do retail investors find the process of regularly/periodicallyproviding and updating personal and financial information for suitability assessmentsclear and workable? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from
experience, where available.***

The entire system needs to be fundamentally rebuilt.

**Q30: For consumer associations: Have retail investors raised concerns about theamount, frequency and type of information they are required to provide for the purposeof suitability assessments? If so, what are the main difficulties they face? *Please explain
and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Investors are frustrated by the extent of information they have to provide. They don't understand the purpose of this activity.

**Q31: Are there any steps in the information collection process that could be simplifiedwithout compromising investor protection and the objective of this collection which isto propose suitable investments matching client profiles? *Please explain and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Reduce the amount of information provided. Tailor it to a specific financial product. Move away from the school test formula, which makes people feel judged.

**Q32: How do retail investors perceive the integration of sustainability preferences insuitability assessments? How has it impacted the investment advice/portfoliomanagement services they receive? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or
evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

The procedure for assessing adequacy is lengthy anyway, so including sustainability as well causes frustration for investors.

**Q33: For consumer associations: Have retail investors expressed concerns about thenew elements related to the “sustainability preferences” and the way they areincorporated into the investment process (are they explained in an understandable wayto clients)? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from
experience, where available.***

**Q34: For firms and trade associations: Have firms observed cases where clientsstruggle to express their sustainability preferences in a meaningful way? How havethese issues been addressed to help retail investors? *Please explain and provide practical
examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q35a: Do retail investors find suitability reports helpful in understanding why a specificinvestment was recommended? In your view, do these reports add meaningful value forclients? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience,
where available.***

No. The obstacles are both greenwashing and the lack of an adequate number of financial products on the market.

**Q35b: For consumer associations: Do you think suitability reports are a useful tool forthe protection of investors and the prevention of mis-selling? *Please explain and provide
practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Not in its current form. The system requires fundamental changes.

**Q35c: For firms and trade associations: What steps have firms taken to ensuresuitability reports are concise, clear, and valuable to retail investors? *Please explain and
provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q36a: Do you believe the MiFID II appropriateness assessment helps ensure that retailinvestors understand the risks of the products they invest in? *Please select one of the
following options and please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from
experience, where available.***

**•** Yes, it is an effective safeguard. **•** Somewhat, but there is room for improvement.• No, it is not particularly effective. **•** Mixed views (please elaborate).

**Q36b: For consumer associations: Have retail investors raised concerns about theappropriateness assessment? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence
drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q37: Do current appropriateness rules and how they are applied by firms effectivelyaddress new types of services that combine payments, savings, and investmentfeatures? *Please explain and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience,
where available.***

**Q38: Are educational tools used during the onboarding process for retail clients? Inyour experience, are these tools primarily aimed at improving financial literacy, or arethey mainly used to justify client access to complex financial products? *Please explain
and provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q39a: Do you believe the current approach to assessing client knowledge andexperience via the appropriateness test (i.e., going beyond self-assessment) createsany barrier to retail engagement in financial markets? *Please explain and provide practical
examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

Yes, investors feel judged and their privacy is violated. They don't encounter this kind of behaviour in many other areas of life or in the unregulated market.

**Q39b: For consumer associations: Have retail investors raised concerns about howtheir knowledge and experience are assessed? *Please explain and provide practical
examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.***

**Q40: Based on your experience, are there aspects of the crowdfunding investor journeythat could be improved to better support retail investors, whether in terms of clarity,accessibility, or overall user experience? *If so, please explain which aspects you would
amend and why, including any suggestions for improvement.***

**Q41: Does the current regulatory framework strike the right balance between protectingretail investors and allowing them to take informed investment risks? *Please explain and
provide practical examples, or evidence drawn from experience, where available.*Q42: Are there any aspects of the retail investor experience – whether related to firmpractices or the regulatory framework – that are not sufficiently addressed in thisconsultation or in the current MiFID II rules? *If so, please explain where changes in rules,
or further supervisory attention or guidance may be helpful.***