

Paris, 31 August 2015

Well aware of the new financial environment, French savers are prepared to boost their investments while accepting a reasonable degree of risk

Natixis Global Asset Management today published the results of its 2nd annual survey of French individual investors with financial assets of between €75,000 and €300,000 held in banks¹. This survey of 1,000 clients of French banks was conducted in May 2015.

French savers have become aware of the very low interest rate environment and its possible impact on their savings in terms of performance.

Almost 80% of individual investors noted the decrease in returns on regulated savings products and in interest rates, 64% noticed the lower return on euro-denominated life insurance products. Many expect the rate of interest on Livret A passbook savings accounts to continue dropping (40%), as well as the return on euro-denominated life insurance products (42%). On the other hand, 64% observed the rise in stock market prices in recent years.

Furthermore, savers are more realistic and pragmatic regarding the return that can currently be expected on an investment. When asked from what level they consider an investment to be profitable, the majority (52%) replied between 3% and 5%. For them, very realistically, topping 3% per year is a threshold.

"2015 marks a real break for French savers. They have become aware of the new environment of very low interest rates which now applies to them and of its impact in terms of expected return on traditional savings products," comments Christine Lacoste, Head of network development at Natixis Asset Management.

This new deal means new dynamics: savers are prepared to boost their investments to get a better performance in the long term.

Reflecting savers' greater maturity, the environment in 2015 is widely seen as being conducive to changing investment objectives (71%), to diversify into new financial investments adapted to the changing environment (71%) or even to invest in stock market-related investments (60%). In actual fact, over the same period, a significant proportion of savers has even taken action: 41% have reviewed their goals, 38% have diversified their savings, 30% have invested in the financial markets.

"The results of our 2015 survey confirm our observations on the ground: investors are gradually moving back into potentially more efficient investments, notably mutual funds (UCI³) and diversified unit-linked accounts, for which they accept a reasonable degree of risk," explains Christine Lacoste.

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French savers focus more on immediate budget savings than on reviewing their savings strategy regularly and astutely. And yet, savings strategies can generate greater potential gains over the long term. Financial advisors play a key role in making them aware of this.

Almost 6 out of 10 savers (58%) say they have already renegotiated a telecom package, more than 55% have renegotiated their car insurance and almost 50% their mortgage, when only just over 40% reviewed their savings strategy in the first half of 2015.

At the same time, like in 2014, banks' financial advisors remain the no.1 source of information and advice for savers (cited by 69%). Financial advisors still have a key role of education and support for individual investors, particularly in understanding the market environment and identifying investment opportunities to be seized.

It should also be noted that the Internet comes top of the media consulted (17% for specialised savings and investment websites), and that its place in the sources of information consulted by savers is constantly growing.

"Financial advisors remain the major players in making savers aware of the benefits of challenging and regularly revisiting their savings strategies – and this, in the same way and with the same agility that savers bring to their credits and existing contracts," explains Christine Lacoste.

Retirement remains a major concern, leading to a surge of interest in more dynamic investments, notably in the financial markets.

Like in 2014, preparing for retirement remains a priority goal for savers. The proportion of savers putting money aside for their retirement remains high in 2015, more than 66% (64% in 2014).

For this purpose, individual investors continue to use savings accounts or passbooks (34%), as well as life insurance (26%). Individual retirement plans have lost some ground (from 16% in 2014 to 12% in 2015). On the other hand, financial and stock market investments have picked up (from 9% to 14%), showing they are becoming more open to more dynamic strategies.

Specifically, individual investors show keen appetite for thematic equity funds, which give more context and purpose to long-term savings. When asked about their interest in equity funds in the themes of agriculture, job creation and the environment, savers express keen interest in all these themes: 42%, 43% and 55%, respectively.

1 - Assets held at household level.

2 - Click here to consult the 2014 survey (press release and presentation of the results) "Retirement – The French paradox: savers choose very safe investments while harboring grand hopes as regards revenue and capital appreciation": [Natixis Asset Management/Communiqués-de-presse/Archive/2014-08](https://www.natixis.com/communique-de-presse/2014-08)

3 – UCI: Undertakings for Collective Investment.

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Methodology

Carried out by CoreData on behalf of Natixis Global Asset Management, this survey involved French individual investors aged 30 to 67, holding financial assets of between €75,000 and €300,000 (assets aggregated at household level). The survey was carried out online between May 25 and 29, 2015 and involved 1,000 French banking network customers.

The survey looks at the behaviour and strategies of retail investors in terms of long-term savings, as well as their savings expertise and expectations.

To check out the full report (only available in French), click on the following link:

[Natixis Asset Management/Press Release](#)

It carries on from a first study conducted and published in 2014: [Natixis Asset Management/Communiqués-de-presse/Archive/2014-08](#)

About Natixis Asset Management

Natixis Asset Management ranks among the leading European asset managers² with €328.6 billion in assets under management and 649 employees¹. Natixis Asset Management offers its clients tailored, innovative and efficient solutions organised into six investment divisions:

Fixed income, European equities, Investment and client solutions, Structured products and volatility developed by Seeyond, Global emerging developed by Emerise, and Responsible Investing developed by Mirova.

¹ Source: Natixis Asset Management - Natixis Asset Management Asia Limited as of 30 June 2015.

² Source: IPE Top 400 Asset Managers 2015 ranked Natixis Asset Management as the 46th largest asset manager based on global assets under management, and by the country of the main headquarters and/or main European domicile, as of 31 December 2014. Reference to a ranking does not indicate the future performance of the fund manager.

Seeyond is a brand of Natixis Asset Management. Emerise is a brand of Natixis Asset Management and Natixis Asset Management Asia Limited with teams in Paris and Singapore. Natixis Asset Management Asia Limited is an asset manager, 100% subsidiary of Natixis Asset Management. Mirova is a subsidiary of Natixis Asset Management.

About Natixis Global Asset Management, S.A

Natixis Global Asset Management, S.A. is a multi-affiliate organization that offers a single point of access to more than 20 specialized investment firms in the U.S., Europe and Asia. The firm ranks among the world's largest asset managers¹. Through its Durable Portfolio Construction® philosophy, the company is dedicated to providing innovative ideas on asset allocation and risk management that can help institutions, advisors and individuals address a range of modern market challenges. Natixis Global Asset Management, S.A. brings together the expertise of multiple specialized investment managers based in Europe, the United States and Asia to offer a wide spectrum of equity, fixed-income and alternative investment strategies.

Headquartered in Paris and Boston, Natixis Global Asset Management, S.A.'s assets under management totaled €811.6 billion as of June 30, 2015². Natixis Global Asset Management, S.A. is part of Natixis.

1. Cerulli Quantitative Update: Global Markets 2014 ranked Natixis Global Asset Management, S.A. as the 16th largest asset manager in the world based on assets under management as of December 31, 2013

2. Source: Natixis Global Asset Management. Assets under management (AUM) may include assets for which non-regulatory AUM services are provided. Non-regulatory AUM includes assets which do not fall within the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission's definition of 'regulatory AUM' in Form ADV, Part 1.