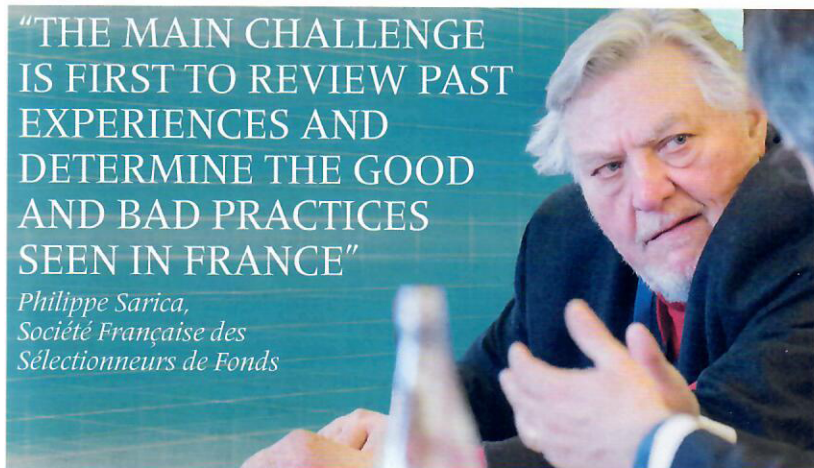


French fund selector association Société Française des Sélectionneurs de Fonds was launched on 22 March. **Adrien Paredes-Vanheule** caught up with its chairman Philippe Sarica

Highlighting French fund selectors' role

"THE MAIN CHALLENGE IS FIRST TO REVIEW PAST EXPERIENCES AND DETERMINE THE GOOD AND BAD PRACTICES SEEN IN FRANCE"

*Philippe Sarica,
Société Française des
Sélectionneurs de Fonds*



What has motivated the launch of the association?

The Société Française des Sélectionneurs (SF2) was created on my initiative around a group of financial experts.

It gathers all professionals whose daily work is to assess the performance of fund managers within French financial institutions. The association aims at highlighting the fund selector role's specificities, proposing best fund selection practices guidelines, delivering training modules and organising events on a regular basis.

It will be composed exclusively of professionals involved in fund selection, multi-management, research and financial teaching, whether they work for asset managers, entrepreneurial boutiques, banking and insurance group subsidiaries, advisory firms, financial research companies or universities and schools.

Its primary mission will consist of informing, supporting and contributing to the training of its members but also taking part to the financial education of a greater audience.

The SF2 carries the ambition of improving the professional knowledge of its members through discussions and experiences held during conferences. Its members will hence be able to integrate various workshops.

After the association's last administration board meeting on 4 December 2017, SF2's board is set as following: Philippe Sarica (La Finance Emotionnelle), chairman; Benoit de Brie (DNCA Invest), treasurer; Aurélia Caruso (Scala Patrimoine), general secretary; Jean-Christophe Cotta (Allocation & Sélection), vice-president; Sandrine Vincelot-Guiot (Vega IM), vice-president.

We are still in the early stages of the association's setup. We expect to reach a hundred members by next December.

What is your view on the job of fund selector?

Fund selection impacts a huge number of activities. It refers to those working in asset management but we must include companies' treasurers, financial executives working for insurance firms, provident and pension schemes. Individuals wanting to handle more fund selection for the management of their personal finance shall be considered as well.

What challenges do fund selectors face?

A challenge for fund selectors is to be recognised for the originality of their approach and their position within all financial institutions mentioned previously. Technically, it means putting forward all aspects of the fund selector's work but also better highlighting his/her role in the implementation of a tactical allocation of fund management styles within each asset class and better define his/her contribution to the value chain of an evolved open-architecture model.

Which challenges are specific to France?

Fund selection enables us to classify funds or portfolio managers within the European competitive asset management landscape, depending of their consistency and the regularity of their performance.

It also allows us to better identify management styles and performance factors portfolio managers are linked to.

In addition, it enables us to situate a selection of funds in comparison to those used or managed internally and to better handle factors of outperformance or underperformance within a company's own portfolio management for firms running an internal fund management business.

The main challenge is first to review past experiences and determine the good and bad practices seen in France.

A second remains to present the evolutions - going beyond quantitative and qualitative techniques - as well as the new ways of fund and portfolio manager's assessment and follow-up.

A further third challenge would be to upgrade regulation as it has much reduced and constrained the activity of fund selection.

What advice would you give to foreign asset managers targeting French fund selectors?

Being well aware of the great diversity of French fund selectors and of the current regulation in place prior to any move. All depends of the fund selectors' positions and roles they hold within the institution they represent and of the objectives that have been set by their organisations: insurance firms, provident institutions, asset managers, intermediary platforms, companies. ■