



Santiago Principles Self-Assessment

BpiFrance

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Pillar 1

Legal framework, objectives, and coordination with macroeconomic policies

Principle 1 Description:

1. The legal framework for the SWF should be sound and support its effective operation and the achievement of its stated objective(s).

1.1. The legal framework for the SWF should ensure legal soundness of the SWF and its transactions.

1.2. The key features of the SWF's legal basis and structure, as well as the legal relationship between the SWF and other state bodies, should be publicly disclosed.

Principle 1 Implementation:

Document: Act No.2012-1599 December 31st, 2012

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000026871127> ^[4] [In French]

Bpifrance is a joint holding company, uniting the activities of the public institution OSEO, CDC Entreprises and the Strategic Investment Fund (Fonds Stratégique d'Investissement or "FSI"). Act no. 2012-1559 of December 31st of 2012 amended Order no. 2005-722 of June 29th of 2005. In turn, OSEO laid down the legal framework and governance arrangements to sanction the creation of Bpifrance.

Bpifrance Financement is a financial company (Compagnie Financière) incorporated under the form of a limited company (Société Anonyme) governed by Article L517-1 of the Code Monétaire et Financier and et Seq. ^[5] [In French]

Ownership of Bpifrance is evenly split (49,18% each) between the French State (through the "EPIC Bpifrance") and the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (the "CDC"). Private commercial banks own 1,35% of Bpifrance's capital. Bpifrance has three main subsidiaries dedicated to financing, export insurance and investments. The investment activities are operated through a management company (Bpifrance Investissement) licensed by the French Financial Market Authorities (AMF).

Therefore, all aspects of its governance, organization and compliance rules follow the French regulation, specifically Article L 531-1 et Seq of the French Financial and Monetary Code ^[6].

[In French] which is directly transposed from the European Union Regulation on asset management, and notably Article 49 of Règlement de l'Union Européenne n°468/2014 ^[7]

[In French]

Principle 2 Description:

The policy purpose of the SWF should be clearly defined and publicly disclosed.

Principle 2 Implementation:

The Act no. 2012-1559 of December 31st of 2012 ^[8] clearly states the objective of Bpifrance and its various components. [In French]

Essentially, Article 1 of the above-mentioned Act designates the Public Investment Bank (BPI) as a public group dedicated to the financing, development and sustainable growth of companies of all sizes, and with an emphasis on public policy whether it be at the national or regional level. Bpifrance focuses on supporting innovation and long-term investments, with an explicit dedication to new technologies, digitalization and ESG goals. It supports the implementation of the energy and ecological transition. When necessary, the BPI works with the European Investment Banks in the context of European macro-economic policy. Moreover, the BPI is a shareholder in many publicly listed companies.

Principle 3 Description:

3. Where the SWF's activities have significant direct domestic macroeconomic implications, those activities should be closely coordinated with the domestic fiscal and monetary authorities, so as to ensure consistency with the overall macroeconomic policies.

Principle 3 Implementation:

Bpifrance is a public entity which invests domestically and abroad. Given the ownership structure of Bpifrance, its shareholders (the French State and Caisse des Dépôts) meet on an annual basis to validate their action plan and decide on whether dividends shall be paid. Moreover, Bpifrance presents its strategy to the State, allowing for alignment and understanding between the State's macroeconomic policy and Bpifrance's role.

Principle 4 Description:

4. There should be clear and publicly disclosed policies, rules, procedures, or arrangements in relation to the SWF's general approach to funding, withdrawal, and spending operations.

4.1. The source of SWF funding should be publicly disclosed.

4.2. The general approach to withdrawals from the SWF and spending on behalf of the government should be publicly disclosed.

Principle 4 Implementation:

The initial funding for Bpifrance was the addition of equity stakes of OSEO SA, CDC Entreprises and Fonds Stratégique d'Investissements. Currently, Bpifrance finances its activities mainly through public markets and management of its own assets. The French State and the CDC, its two shareholders, may decide to increase its capital, as they did in 2015. All annual reports of Bpifrance reveal operational results, activities and increase of capital. They can be found on the [Bpifrance's website](#) ^[9]. [In French]

As an asset manager, Bpifrance is independent in its investment activities from its shareholders. Its objectives are clearly stated and reported in its annual reports. Bpifrance is a proven long-term investor.

Principle 5 Description:

5. The relevant statistical data pertaining to the SWF should be reported on a timely basis to the owner, or as otherwise required, for inclusion where appropriate in macroeconomic data sets.

Principle 5 Implementation:

Bpifrance publishes an annual report on its website. The report contains all relevant information, including financial results and performances. Media coverage of the report is expected and is supported through press conferences with reputable journalists. The

financial report, once reviewed by auditors, is approved by the shareholders and then released. In addition, Article 5 of the above-mentioned act (see below) obliges the CEO of Bpifrance to report to the French Parliament on a yearly basis.

Article 5 of Act No.2012-1599 December 31st, 2012 ^[8]

[In French]

Pillar 2

Institutional Framework and Governance Structure

Principle 6 Description:

6. The governance framework for the SWF should be sound and establish a clear and effective division of roles and responsibilities in order to facilitate accountability and operational independence in the management of the SWF to pursue its objectives.

Principle 6 Implementation:

Bpifrance is managed by a CEO and a Deputy CEO. Several executive directors lead distinct and various activities which prevent conflicts of interest. Due to its dual activities of investment and financing, Bpifrance is under the supervision of the AMF ^[10] [In French] as well as the Banking supervisor (ACPR) ^[11]. [In French]

Hence, sovereign wealth fund's activities (Bpifrance Investissement) are subject to both French asset and market regulations.

The board of the main entities of Bpifrance Groupe is composed of shareholders' representatives, as well as independent/qualified members. Article 3 of Act No.2012-1599 December 31st, 2012 ^[12] [In French].

Our website provides more information to support our high level of corporate standards and transparency ^[13]. [In French]

Principle 7 Description:

7. The owner should set the objectives of the SWF, appoint the members of its governing body(ies) in accordance with clearly defined procedures, and exercise oversight over the SWF's operations.

Principle 7 Implementation:

Act no. 2012-1559 of December 31st of 2012 ^[8] clearly establishes the role of the shareholders.

[In French]

Shareholders appoint board members that supervise the activities of the company.

The CEO is appointed by decree of the President of the French Republic. Article 3 of Act No.2012-1599 December 31st, 2012 ^[12] [In French].

Cf. to GAAP 2 for clarifications regarding BPI's objectives.

Principle 8 Description:

8. The governing body(ies) should act in the best interests of the SWF, and have a clear mandate and adequate authority and competency to carry out its functions.

Principle 8 Implementation:

Under Act no. 2012-1559 of December 31st of 2012 Article 3 and 6 ^[8] [In French]

Bpifrance's Board defines objectives for the investment branch on an annual basis and sets ambitious targets. Despite renewed annual objectives, management also acts in compliance and accordance with the Bpifrance Investment policy, which includes long-term benchmarks and guidelines. The annual report has consistently assessed the performance of activities and evaluates the success of Bpifrance's investments.

Principle 9 Description:

9. The operational management of the SWF should implement the SWF's strategies in an independent manner and in accordance with clearly defined responsibilities.

Principle 9 Implementation:

The CEO is appointed by decree of the French President. However, French regulations provide a framework ^[11] guaranteeing adequate capacity and authority for managers to exercise their duties efficiently and in independent fashion. [In French]

The organizational chart of Bpifrance clearly establishes the responsibilities of the executive management vis-à-vis the management board.

Principle 10 Description:

10. The accountability framework for the SWF's operations should be clearly defined in the relevant legislation, charter, other constitutive documents, or management agreement.

Principle 10 Implementation:

Bpifrance undergoes regular external and internal audits. In addition, its two shareholders as well as the French Parliament supervise its activities. Bpifrance acts in accordance with EU ethical and compliance standards such as the Anti-Money Laundering and Corruption principles ^[14].

Principle 11 Description:

11. An annual report and accompanying financial statements on the SWF's operations and performance should be prepared in a timely fashion and in accordance with recognized international or national accounting standards in a consistent manner.

Principle 11 Implementation:

An annual report is published after approval by the General Assembly of Shareholders ^[15].

[In French]

Financial statements are produced according to the IFRS standards as implemented in EU regulation.

In addition, the Court of Audit, the French public financial jurisdiction ("Cour des Comptes") is entrusted to audit Bpifrance.

Principle 12 Description:

12. The SWF's operations and financial statements should be audited annually in accordance with recognized international or national auditing standards in a consistent manner.

Principle 12 Implementation:

Financial statements and annual report are reviewed by auditors. Bpifrance performs internal auditing through its own team and hires both Mazars and PricewaterhouseCoopers to perform external audits.

However, all subsidiaries of Bpifrance's International Capital division are audited exclusively by PricewaterhouseCoopers. The 2014/56/UE Directive empowers the EU Commission to incorporate International Audit Standards (IAS) in the EU regulation. ^[16] [In French]

Bpifrance annual account are presented under the IFRS norms.

Principle 13 Description:

13. Professional and ethical standards should be clearly defined and made known to the members of the SWF's governing body(ies), management, and staff.

Principle 13 Implementation:

Professional and ethical standards for banking and asset management are directly implemented from the EU Directive 2013/36 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013L0036...> ^[17] [In French] and are transposed in French law from the EU directive with Order of November 3rd, 2014 ^[18] [In French].

Bpifrance complies with the regulations mentioned above, it being specified that their

applications are regularly reviewed by the French regulators.

Principle 14 Description:

14. Dealing with third parties for the purpose of the SWF's operational management should be based on economic and financial grounds, and follow clear rules and procedures.

Principle 14 Implementation:

Bpifrance is a Limited Partner (LP) in funds in France and overseas. External managers are selected based on selective criteria. Bpifrance invests in external funds and has two main objectives: (1) contributing to the growth of SMEs, and (2) to gain sustainable long-term financial returns. Bpifrance is keen on making a positive impact on General Partners (GP) in fostering innovation and improving best practices.

Principle 15 Description:

15. SWF operations and activities in host countries should be conducted in compliance with all applicable regulatory and disclosure requirements of the countries in which they operate.

Principle 15 Implementation:

Bpifrance is compliant and acts in strict accordance with the regulatory and legislative frameworks in any jurisdiction. The legal department works closely with Bpifrance Investissement to ensure legitimacy and compliance.

Principle 16 Description:

16. The governance framework and objectives, as well as the manner in which the SWF's management is operationally independent from the owner, should be publicly disclosed.

Principle 16 Implementation:

The Act No.2012-1599 December 31st, 2012 ^[8] establishes the composition of the management board, its role and its accountability. [In French]

In addition, Bpifrance investissement is managed under the supervision of the French Market Authorities (AMF). The supervision grants independence from the board in day-to-day operations, prevents conflicts of interest and insures transparency.

Principle 17 Description:

17. Relevant financial information regarding the SWF should be publicly disclosed to demonstrate its economic and financial orientation, so as to contribute to stability in international financial markets and enhance trust in recipient countries.

Principle 17 Implementation:

Please refer to our response on GAPP 11 and 12 ^[15]. Our annual reports are consistently

published on our website and are available to the public.

Pillar 3

Investment and Risk Management Framework

Principle 18 Description:

18. The SWF's investment policy should be clear and consistent with its defined objectives, risk tolerance, and investment strategy, as set by the owner or the governing body(ies), and be based on sound portfolio management principles.

18.1. The investment policy should guide the SWF's financial risk exposures and the possible use of leverage.

18.2. The investment policy should address the extent to which internal and/or external investment managers are used, the range of their activities and authority, and the process by which they are selected and their performance monitored.

18.3. A description of the investment policy of the SWF should be publicly disclosed.

Principle 18 Implementation:

Bpifrance established an investment policy which is available on its website ^[15]. [In French].

Annual reports and investor presentations published on the website provide additional insights relating to asset allocation, risk and return objectives as well as preferred sectors to invest in.

The investment strategy is long term, encompasses the management's market wisdom and risk is evaluated seriously. Moreover, Bpifrance invests in companies of all sizes

In terms of internal managers, Bpifrance takes pride in posting all employment offerings on the website to the general public ^[19]. [In French]

Principle 19 Description:

19. The SWF's investment decisions should aim to maximize risk-adjusted financial returns in a manner consistent with its investment policy, and based on economic and financial grounds.

19.1. If investment decisions are subject to other than economic and financial considerations, these should be clearly set out in the investment policy and be publicly disclosed.

19.2. The management of an SWF's assets should be consistent with what is generally accepted as sound asset management principles.

Principle 19 Implementation:

Bpifrance's mandate is to foster growth and the development of French companies, either by capital, financing, guarantees and insurance instruments.

With respect to equity instruments, funds of funds, and co-financing activities, Bpifrance always seeks to invest at market conditions with an objective to maximize risk-adjusted financial returns.

As a distinct and separate activity in its business model, Bpifrance shall also intervene where private markets sometimes lack resources (i.e. for state related activities including guaranteed loan and export-credit activities).

Principle 20 Description:

20. The SWF should not seek or take advantage of privileged information or inappropriate influence by the broader government in competing with private entities.

Principle 20 Implementation:

Bpifrance as an investment manager is compliant with EU directive 2013/36/UE regarding market abuses. ^[17] [In French]

Therefore, strong conflicts of interests' rules and "Chinese walls" have been institutionalized to prevent all forms of market abuses and the misuse of privileged information.

Principle 21 Description:

21. SWFs view shareholder ownership rights as a fundamental element of their equity investments' value. If an SWF chooses to exercise its ownership rights, it should do so in a manner that is consistent with its investment policy and protects the financial value of its investments. The SWF should publicly disclose its general approach to voting securities of listed entities, including the key factors guiding its exercise of ownership rights.

Principle 21 Implementation:

Bpifrance always invests in companies with minority stakes and seeks a position in corporate governance.

Bpifrance continuously searches for private investment partners in order to stimulate the financial markets. Its investment horizon adapts to the technological capabilities of companies, and it takes pride in gaining returns on longer investment term than most investors.

Principle 22 Description:

22. The SWF should have a framework that identifies, assesses, and manages the risks of its operations.

22.1. The risk management framework should include reliable information and timely

reporting systems, which should enable the adequate monitoring and management of relevant risks within acceptable parameters and levels, control and incentive mechanisms, codes of conduct, business continuity planning, and an independent audit function.

22.2. The general approach to the SWF's risk management framework should be publicly disclosed.

Principle 22 Implementation:

Bpifrance has an internal audit department as well as a compliance department. The legal department is also included in investment processes.

Risk management of Bpifrance subscribes to the Monetary and Financial Code [20] [In French], from Order of November 3rd, 2014 [21] [In French] (replacing the former rule 97 02 of the CRBF), general rules of the French Market Authority and the Alternative Investment Fund Managers (AIFM) directive [22] [In French].

Principle 23 Description:

23. The assets and investment performance (absolute and relative to benchmarks, if any) of the SWF should be measured and reported to the owner according to clearly defined principles or standards.

Principle 23 Implementation:

The objectives are clearly stated in the Bpifrance Investment policy and all asset and holding performances are displayed in the annual reports [15]. Measures are according to EU standards.

Principle 24 Description:

24. A process of regular review of the implementation of the GAPP should be engaged in by or on behalf of the SWF.

Principle 24 Implementation:

Along with our regular annual auditing processes, we will be in full compliance with all IFSWF review processes and plan to internally self-assess each of the 24 GAPP on a regular basis before sharing the results with IFSWF Secretariat.

Source URL (modified on 2023-02-14 18:52):<https://www.ifswf.org/assessment/bpifrances-2022-self-assessment-2022>

Links

[1] <https://www.ifswf.org/node/2526> [2] <https://www.bpifrance.fr/nos-solutions/investissement>

[3] <https://www.ifswf.org/assessments>

[4] <http://Document: Act No.2012-1599 December 31st, 2012>

<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000026871127> [In French] Bpifrance is a joint holding company, uniting the activities of the public institution OSEO, CDC Entreprises and the Strategic Investment Fund (Fonds Stratégique d'Investissement or "FSI"). Act no. 2012-1559 of December 31st of 2012 amended Order no. 2005-722 of June 29th of 2005. In turn, OSEO laid down the legal framework and governance arrangements to sanction the creation of Bpifrance. Bpifrance

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[In French] which is directly transposed from the European Union Regulation on asset management, and notably Article 49 of Règlement de l’Union Européenne n°468/2014 https://www.ecb.europa.eu/ecb/legal/pdf/celex_32014r0468_fr_txt.pdf

[5] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006072026&idArticle=LEGIART100>

[6] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCodeArticle.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006072026&idArticle=LEGIART100>

[7] https://www.ecb.europa.eu/ecb/legal/pdf/celex_32014r0468_fr_txt.pdf

[8] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000026871127>

[9] <http://https://www.bpifrance.fr/Investor-Relations> [10] <https://www.amf-france.org/reglement/RG-en-vigueur> [11] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/arrrete/2014/11/3/FCPT1423259A/jo/texte>

[12] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000026871127&categorieLien=id>

[13] <https://www.bpifrance.fr/content/download/3499/46658/version/2/file/DoctrineBpifranceavril2014.pdf>

[14] https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/banking-and-finance/financial-supervision-and-risk-management/anti-money-laundering-and-countermeasures-financing-terrorism_en

[15] <https://www.bpifrance.fr/Investor-Relations> [16] <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014L0056>

[17] <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013L0036&from=EN>

[18] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000029700770&categorieLien=id>

[19] <https://talents.bpifrance.fr/opportunités>

[20] https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/codes/texte_lc/LEGITEXT000006072026/2022-04-22/

[21] <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000029700770&categorieLien=id>

[22] <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32011L0061&from=FR>