

Institutional investors: pension funds, insurers, foundations

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Swiss sustainable finance is driven first and foremost by institutional investors, a significant proportion of whom are based in Geneva. Swiss pension funds manage assets of the order of CHF 1,200 billion. A growing share of them have adopted responsible investment policies, prompted by their members, by the umbrella associations and by initiatives such as the pension funds' climate alliance.¹ Insurers, subject to their own risk management requirements, have integrated climate risks into their models. Foundations, which are numerous in Geneva, align their investments with their mission. These investors mandate Geneva managers and require detailed sustainability reports from them, which has spread the practices throughout the financial centre.

For private wealth management, the effect is indirect but real. The tools, data and methods developed for institutional investors are made available to private clients, whose sustainability preferences must be ascertained. Geneva's family offices, described in Part E, occupy an intermediate position. Equipped with resources comparable to those of institutional investors, they apply to the family wealth responsible investment policies that are often more demanding than those of pension funds, because the family bears the consequences directly.

1 Notes

1. Association suisse des institutions de prévoyance (Swiss Pension Fund Association), page “Faits” (asip.ch): total assets of CHF 1,066 billion at the end of 2022, 1,355 pension institutions in 2023, 4,751,360 active members (2023) and 1,317,867 pension recipients (2022); Federal Council, press release of 23 December 2024 on the 2023 pension fund statistics (admin.ch): net investment result of CHF 54 billion (against a loss of CHF 105 billion in 2022), fluctuation reserves of CHF 94 billion.



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