

ECB Reporting & EIOPA Information Requests Frequently Asked Questions



April 2019

**European Central Bank (ECB) Statistical Reporting Regulations for Pension Funds
European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority (EIOPA) Regular Information Requests
regarding provision of Occupational Pensions Information**

Frequently Asked Questions (dated 5 April 2019)

This document is intended to provide answers to the most frequently asked questions about the new pension fund reporting regulations. They are not intended to be definitive and readers should seek appropriate advice and refer back regularly as the questions and answers are revised and updated.

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1. Legislative Background

a. What are the new regulations?

There are 2 different sets of new reporting requirements coming into effect for pension funds

- 1. European Central Bank (ECB) – The ECB have passed a regulation requiring pension funds to report detailed data on assets, liabilities and membership numbers on a quarterly and annual basis to the Central Bank of Ireland. First reporting will be in December 2019. [Click here to see the Regulation.](#)*
- 2. European Insurance and Occupation Pension Authority (EIOPA) – EIOPA made a decision of their Board of Supervisors to collect detailed data on assets, liabilities and membership numbers on a quarterly and annual basis. EIOPA passes the requirement to the Pensions Authority (PA) and the PA must arrange to collect the detailed data from the occupational pension funds under its supervision. [Click here to see the Decision.](#)*

b. What is the difference between the reporting requirements?

The majority of the requirements overlap e.g. it will be the same pension funds chosen for more detailed reporting, with generally the same level of data required with the same definitions and due at the same time.

The main differences are

- 1. Trustees will need to make two separate data submissions. One to the Central Bank and one to the Pensions Authority*
- 2. Pension funds with assets over €1b will have their information passed from the PA to EIOPA on an anonymised basis.*
- 3. Look through – EIOPA requires that pension funds, required to report quarterly, would also report detailed information on their asset holdings on an annual basis. This is called the “look through” as it is looking past their balance sheet totals to see what are the actual underlying assets being held. The look through requirement for pension funds over €1bn only applies to non UCITS funds that comprise more than 10% of the pension fund’s assets.*

c. Who is required to make the reports?

In both cases, complying with the requirements is the responsibility of the pension funds Trustees.

The ECB Regulations makes “reporting agents” primarily responsible for making returns (Article 4.1). The definition of a reporting agent includes legal and natural persons who hold information that is necessary to fulfil the ECB’s statistical reporting requirements. Trustees take primary responsibility for reporting. The existing definitions would not include either the Registered Administrator or the Investment Manager as being responsible.

Currently, the PA have indicated that they will be looking for Registered Administrators to make the returns on behalf of the Trustees. There is no legislative back-up currently to require this. Therefore Trustees must take the lead in ensuring someone makes the required reports.

- d. What requirements will be placed on investment managers and what are trustees' options/recourse in the event that managers are unable and/or unwilling to share certain levels of detail (i.e. security level, where funds of funds are held etc.)?

The regulation is binding on Trustees and pension funds, therefore, they must ensure that information required to complete the returns is provided by investment managers. Trustees and fund should consider making information requirements a feature of their agreements with investment managers.

- e. What pension funds are required to report?

The ECB regulations cover all Occupational Pension Funds in Ireland plus trust retirement annuity contracts (RACs) and funded s52 schemes. All larger pension funds will have to make quarterly and annual returns. Small pension funds are required to make annual returns.

The Central Bank have notified all of the pension funds that are required to make initial quarterly returns. You should have received a notification from the Central Bank. You can also check the list of pension funds on the Central Bank's website, [here](#).

The EIOPA requirements apply to all Occupation Pension Funds. The initial set of pension funds required to make quarterly returns is the same as that notified by the Central Bank.

If a scheme is fully wound-up by the first reference date of 30 September 2019 then it will be exempt from detailed reporting.

The list of pensions funds subject will be next updated in June 2020 and any pension funds moved from reduced reporting to detailed reporting will commence with the Q1 return of 2021.

- f. What should Master Trust Pension Funds report?

Master Trust Pension Funds should submit quarterly/annual returns covering all required information in a single return.

- g. Will there be a consistent format for information to be sent from the investment manager, or will the reporter be expected to pour through and interpret reams of raw data (as was often the case for funding Standard Reserve asset data)?

The Central Bank have provided draft [templates](#) for the submission of data from Trustees to the Central Bank. The Trustees are responsible for determining the format of information to be sent from investment manager to the Trustee.

2. The detail

- a. What are pension funds required to report?

Pension funds must report detailed information as follows

ECB – the reporting tables are set out in Annex I to the [Regulations](#). Use the Central Bank's [sample reporting templates](#) as these are easier to follow and use. The definitions or what should be in each field are set out in Annex II.

EIOPA - the reporting templates are set out in sections 2 and 3 of the decision document.

Both bodies refer to the requirements as “taxonomies”.

b. What are the reporting dates?

Quarterly – pension fund returns will be based on the quarter end reference date in that quarter e.g. 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December. All pension funds, irrespective of their current annual reporting date, must use the calendar quarter system to compile their quarterly returns.

Detailed Annual – pension funds returns will be based on the calendar pension year end

Reduced Annual – pension funds returns will be based on their scheme year end date that falls within the calendar year e.g. for 2019, a pension fund making up its annual report to 31 March 2019 will use this date to prepare its return for 2019 by 19 May 2020. Trustees should note that the return based on the annual report for 31 March 2020 must be returned by 4 August 2020.

Please find a document from the Central Bank that explains the reporting dates in greater detail [here](#).

c. What is the reporting basis of the annual liability figure i.e. is it funding standard, ongoing or accounting?

Reporting will be on an accounting basis, with all financial assets and liabilities being reported on a gross basis for statistical purposes.

d. What is the effective date of the liability calculation, for example, must it relate to the end of the pension fund year as per Annual Actuarial Data Return (AADR) requirements or can any date within a prior 12 month window be used?

For the detailed returns data should be reported as at the calendar year end. For the reduced reporting population the data should be reported at the pension fund year end.

e. Does the liability data requirement commence from 30 September 2019? If so what figures must be reported given most calculations of the liability will relate to another date such as 1 January?

The requirement to submit liabilities data is for the annual return and not the quarterly return. The Central Bank will derive quarterly liabilities based on the annual data received.

f. Exposures split by market value are not always available and instead we sometimes see them split by risk allocation due to derivative contracts held. Would this format be acceptable for certain pension funds?

Market Values will need to be reported. A draft guide on how to fill in the templates and the information required can be located [here](#). Reference ER0140 can be used for specific guidance on Financial Derivatives.

- g. Can you please clarify what you mean by “investment funds” and “pension fund reserves” in the context of pension fund investment?

Definitions of these terms can be found in the following document on the Central Bank’s website.

3. Submitting the returns

- a. When are the first reports due?

ECB/Central Bank of Ireland

First quarterly returns for the quarter end 30 September 2019 must be submitted by 9th December 2019

First annual detailed returns for 2019 year ends are due by 19th May 2020

First annual reduced returns for 2019 year ends are due by 19th May 2020

EIOPA/Pensions Authority

First quarterly returns for the quarter end 30 September 2019 must be submitted by 9th December 2019

First annual detailed returns for 2019 year ends are due by 19th May 2020

First annual reduced returns for 2019 year ends are due by 19th May 2020

Please find a document from the Central Bank that explains the reporting dates in greater detail [here](#).

- b. How will the data be submitted?

The data must be submitted to the relevant portal provided by the Central Bank and Pensions Authority.

The Central Bank will accept only data in the XBRL format for detailed quarterly and annual returns. Reduced annual returns should be submitted in Excel/CSV format.

- c. Who do we send the data to?

The data must be submitted to the relevant portal provided by the Central Bank and Pensions Authority.

- d. How do we send the data?

The data must be submitted to the relevant portal provided by the Central Bank and Pensions Authority.

4. Validation of the returns

- a. What checks will be carried out on the data submitted?

There are currently 203 validation checks built into the ECB/EIOPA model for checking data that is received. The number of validation checks will likely increase as the data model is tested and improved. The current list of validations can be found on the EIOPA website, [here](#).

- b. What happens if the data fails the validation?

You will not be able to upload the data. This will affect all of the templates required e.g. if there is an error in one template then all templates for a pension fund will be rejected?

- c. What do I do then?

You will need to update your data so that the validation check is passed and resubmit the data.

We are aware from insurance companies that make reports under Solvency 2, a similar reporting process, that the level of resubmissions was high, time consuming and time sensitive. We recommend that time is allowed in your planning for validation and resubmission, try to avoid leaving returns to the last possible moment.

The Central Bank may also come back with queries on the data, after submission.

- d. What happens if pension funds do not submit the returns?

If Trustees fail to report or report incorrect information or report in the wrong format then there is a potential for a fine for each breach under existing ECB regulations (2533/98). The Central Bank have a formal non-compliance procedure where Trustees do not interact to make the required returns.

5. More information

- a. Where to go for more information?

[European Central Bank webpage](#)

[European Insurance and Occupational Pension Authority webpage](#)

[Central Bank webpage](#)

[Central Bank Frequently Asked Questions page](#)

[Pensions Authority webpage](#)

- b. Where can I find the requirements?

- [Statistical Reporting Requirements for Pension Funds \(ECB/2018/231\)](#)
- [Decision of the Board of Supervisors on EIOPA's regular information requests regarding provision of occupational pensions information](#)

- c. Who can help me?

If you have further questions then please submit them to one of the following

Central Bank – send to stats_pensions@centralbank.ie

If you have any questions that you would like to see answered in the IAPF's FAQ then please send us an email to info@iapf.ie

A number of external service providers have made themselves known to the IAPF. For the full list of providers of which we are aware, please see the IAPF's [website](#).

Dated 5th April 2019

Ends