

# Sovereign Wealth Funds' (SWFs') Social Media Strategies

Piotr Wiśniewski

Financial Market Speculation and Investment Unit, Institute of Risk and Financial Market Speculation, Warsaw School of Economics, Warsaw, Poland

[pwisni2@sgh.waw.pl](mailto:pwisni2@sgh.waw.pl)

**Abstract:** It is estimated that there are currently 100 major Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs) in operation worldwide, which command an asset total of some US\$10.31tr (SWFI, 2023). SWFs are thus the largest class of nontraditional (alternative) pooled investment vehicles by assets under management (outstripping by far more conspicuous hedge-, private equity- or exchange traded funds (TheCityUK, 2021). Although SWFs tend to pursue a variety of objectives or their combinations: efficient management of foreign exchange (f/x) reserves, socioeconomic development, pension reform, macroeconomic stabilization and direct investments, their overriding goal is an intergenerational transfer of wealth – in conformity with the tenets of sustainable development (Brundtland, 1987). Despite fiduciary mandates to manage the savings of entire countries, states or provinces, SWFs tend to be highly opaque - their information disclosures performed via traditional media are scrumpy, infrequent and irregular. Most SWFs, although theoretically accountable to their societies, including the future generations of their beneficiaries, tend to shy away from social media engagement, i.e. the very media that such beneficiaries will increasingly use. The primary hypothesis set and examined in this research is thus a pervading and chronic lack of proactive social media policies by most SWFs. Although 78 SWFs maintain proprietary websites and some even use selected social media platforms to promulgate user-oriented content, they fail to engage societies (their primary stakeholders) in any form of interactive dialogue or accountability. SWFs' use of social media is thus primarily geared to disseminating self-selected scraps of information without any pretense to comprehensiveness, regularity and interactivity. The paper empirically examines the social media strategies of most active SWFs and their role in enhancing the social accountability of their operations. The research also raises the need for more public awareness of SWFs' objectives and activity.

**Keywords:** sovereign wealth funds, social media, information disclosures, transparency, social accountability, sustainability, governance

---

## 1. Introduction

Sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) are considered the largest class of alternative (non-traditional) pooled investment vehicles (a.k.a. collective investment schemes) by assets under management (TheCityUK, 2021). SWFs, fueled by burgeoning foreign exchange reserves owed to commodity exportation, brisk economic growth or both, have largely defied the ebb and flow of asset values experienced during the 21<sup>st</sup> century by most global asset managers (including the Global Depression of 2007-2009 and the recent COVID-19 pandemic). The stellar rise of SWFs has prompted observers and researchers to investigate their inherent traits and motives, a daunting task in light of these funds' perennial opacity.

Based on empirical evidence and in spite of limited transparency, SWFs tend to exhibit several distinctive hallmarks (Wiśniewski, 2018), (Al-Hassan *et al.*, 2013). To be considered independent asset managers, SWFs have to operate on the back of a clearcut *fiduciary mandate* whereby a separate asset pool is delegated to them and ring-fenced away from the holdings of other state-managed bodies managing f/x reserves, e.g. central banks or finance ministries. Furthermore, and in line with their very definition, SWFs are established by sovereigns, and, to be reasonable, the original decision to set up an SWF should be premised on and preceded by an in-depth macroeconomic *cost-benefit analysis (CBA)*, otherwise it smacks of pointless "mental accounting" (Thaler, 1990) best summed up by an English adage "to rob Peter to pay Paul". For SWFs to earn their keep, the funds should strive for competitive, long-run returns benchmarked against risk (usually quantified via volatility) and the ongoing *performance* of other investment managers (both public and private). Most socially accountable and responsible SWFs will thus endeavor to demonstrate competitive returns based on the opportunity cost of capital. Numerous SWFs tend to invest internationally which, in view of their sizable portfolios, implies the quest for substantial cross-asset and cross-country investment heterogeneity and *productive diversification*. SWFs display unparalleled *long-termism*; their investment horizons (spanning decades or even centuries) enable them to extract illiquidity premiums from asset classes devoid of a vibrant secondary market and thereby shunned by most competitors – including financial institutions. Last but not least, the majority of SWFs promote an intergenerational transfer of wealth: numerous SWFs foster financial solidarity among generations, which ties back into the paradigm of sustainable development (Sharma 2017).

To comprehend the roles SWFs play in modern societies, it is helpful to catalogue missions typically espoused by SWFs. They usually go beyond the sheer pursuit of risk-adjusted efficiencies and routinely involve one of more socioeconomic objective(s) (Wiśniewski, 2018) discussed hereunder.

*Intergenerational solidarity* and intergenerational equity are central to the concept of sustainable development, i.e. fervent belief that “Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland, 1987). This most fundamental and rudimentary role played by SWFs helps ensure a transfer of wealth so as to let future generations reap the benefits of nonrenewable commodity extraction or export-driven, rapid economic growth. In prioritizing this goal, SWFs recognize the transient nature of f/x reserves and necessity to safeguard their purchasing power for generations to come. Conceptually, intergenerational solidarity hinges on social contract theory (Bengtson and Oyama, 2007) and an adequate, self-imposed discipline to forgo part of current consumption and transfer it into the future, a formidable challenge to most democracies.

*Efficient management of (f/x) reserves* is expected to enhance the quality of SWFs’ investment returns in risk-adjusted terms. Empirical evidence has demonstrated the statistical superiority of passive over active investment and private over state-owned asset management (Bharali, R. *et al.*, 2022). Yet, in certain cases and assuming the professionalism of the recruitment process, career progression and performance-related remuneration, certain SWFs have managed to live up to these expectations, especially with comparison to the purely saving character of f/x assets held by central banks.

*Socioeconomic development* is an SWF function whose scope is relatively broad: improved labor efficiency, international competitiveness, macroeconomic expansion, technical modernization, industrial diversification and leadership, welfare systems, job creation, environmental, social and governance enhancement (ESG) but can be broken down into subsets of productive enhancement: hard (material) and soft (human) infrastructure.

*Pension reform*: SWFs are trying to plug the gap in most contemporary retirement systems whose replacement ratios (measured as the first pension related to the last salary) are dramatically low and are set to sink even further. Such SWFs are providing an additional mechanism of state-sponsored reallocation of current resources to future target dates when a total collapse of the retirement system appears to be conceivable (Cottarelli, 2011). The assumption being made is that neither public nor private pension plans will be sufficient to provide adequate retirement security or living standards.

*Macroeconomic stabilization*: SWFs strive to reduce macroeconomic volatility by focusing on one of the following policies: monetary, fiscal and trade. In this vein, state interventionism can be used to mitigate risks related to budget deficits, commodity prices, trade deficits, external shocks and catastrophic events, including pandemics (Wiśniewski, 2023).

*Direct investment*: SWFs play roles analogous to the private equity limited partners (LPs), essentially – financial institutions, coinvesting alongside general partners (GPs), i.e. portfolio company management teams, into nonpublic equities throughout the entire lifecycle of such projects: all the way from venture capital (seed capital and startup phases) through grown and expansion stages, all the way to management buy outs (MBOs).

Evidently, all these roles imply social costs and benefits as well as require substantial cornerstone expenditure, therefore a high degree of transparency and accountability should be expected. This paper will examine whether these standards are met by SWFs, especially with regard to social media strategies.

## 2. Motivation for this research

The author’s motivation for the paper is threefold and stems from the following logical consequence: 1) if SWFs are the world’s *largest* nontraditional (alternative) *pooled investment vehicles* whose overriding objective is a socioeconomically beneficial and sustainable *intergenerational transfer of national wealth*, and 2) if such an intergenerational *social contract* has far-reaching *implications* for the populations and other stakeholders involved, then 3) SWFs should engage them in all *effective ways*, including *social media*, especially in view of the increasing popularity of that media *genre*. Failure to do so can be considered socially irresponsible and unaccountable.

## 3. SWFs’ accountability and transparency

The job of a well-designed and lucid corporate governance system is to maximally align the objectives of all (internal and external) stakeholders and minimize frictions among them, although “inter-functional” conflicts (existing within stakeholder groups) also matter (Carney *et al.*, 2010). SWFs, as other financial institutions, are a

powerful stakeholder class, whereas their impacts on portfolio companies as well as on other stakeholders and fellow SWFs are complex and multifaceted (Aguilera et al., 2016).

As shown in Figure 1, (Al-Hassan et al., 2013), an SWF's *governance* framework overlaps other pivotal elements of SWF policymaking, such as: *objectives* (socioeconomic and not necessarily financial), *investment strategy* (strategic and tactical asset allocation) and *reporting* (information disclosure routines). None of these elements can exist in isolation to the others and – as with most ecosystems – it is their synergies and spillovers that determine the overall success or failure of SWF operations.



**Figure 1: Main Elements of SWF Policy**

Source: Al-Hassan et al. (2013).

SWFs' transparency is a key driver of the funds' social responsibility and accountability. As societies are their SWFs' original and ultimate mandators, they have every right to comprehend and monitor the SWFs' behavior. Various forms of SWF transparency can be identified, as such funds need to inform all other stakeholders of numerous factors related to their intricate workings. Dixon (2014) identifies the following subsets of SWFs' openness (as well as their relevant objectives and methods of compliance):

**Table 1: Framing SWF Transparency**

Form of transparency	Objectives	Methods
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify the policy goals of the SWF</li> <li>To clarify the relationship of the SWF vis-à-vis the state</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mission statement</li> <li>Legal framework</li> </ul>
Procedural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify the governance architecture of the SWF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board selection procedure (inc. requisite qualifications)</li> <li>Internal and external delegation procedures</li> <li>Corporate engagement procedures</li> </ul>
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify the rules and objectives imposed on decisionmakers in implementing an investment mandate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disclosure of internal and external mandates</li> <li>Corporate engagement policy</li> </ul>
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify the way an investment strategy is implemented and by whom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disclosure of internal and external mandates</li> <li>Disclosure of asset allocation, specific investments, and intended holding periods</li> <li>Corporate engagement actions</li> </ul>
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify the investment outcomes achieved by the fund</li> <li>To clarify how investment outcomes serve policy goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short- and long-term performance metrics</li> <li>External audits</li> <li>Qualitative assessment of investment activities</li> <li>Qualitative assessment of organizational culture and effectiveness</li> </ul>

Source: Dixon (2014).

Despite a deficit of scientific literature devoted to SWFs’ use of social media, a number of initiatives have been launched to assess and help upgrade SWFs’ information policies involving traditional media. Among such initiatives have been the SWF Scoreboard (Truman, 2007), the Santiago Principles (IWG, 2008) and The Linaburg-Maduell Transparency Index (Linaburg and Maduell, 2008, 2023). Unsurprisingly, these initiatives happened to proliferate during the Great Depression of our time when SWFs’ investments (including bailouts or opportunistic acquisitions) gained plenty of traction. In this paper, arguably the most conceptually advanced and synthetic metric (The Linaburg-Maduell Transparency Index, on a scale from 1 to 10) has been used as a yardstick of SWFs’ general standards of transparency. Its equally-weighted components are contained in Table 2.

**Table 2: Linaburg-Maduell Transparency Index Methodology**

Point	Principles of Linaburg-Maduell Transparency Index
1	Fund provides history including reason for creation, origins of wealth, and government ownership structure
1	Fund provides up-to-date independently audited annual reports
1	Fund provides ownership percentage of company holdings, and geographic locations of holdings
1	Fund provides total portfolio market value, returns, and management compensation
1	Fund provides guidelines in reference to ethical standards, investment policies, and enforcer of guidelines
1	Fund provides clear strategies and objectives
1	If applicable, the fund clearly identifies subsidiaries and contact information
1	If applicable, the fund identifies external managers
1	Fund manages its own web site
1	Fund provides main office location address and contact information such as telephone and fax

Source: LMTI (2008, 2023).

#### 4. Rationale for SWFs’ use of social media

The relevance of SWFs to social media might at first seem counterintuitive. After all, some SWFs’ history is measured in centuries, whereas most social media have records spanning merely years or (maximally) decades. Furthermore, SWFs by virtue of their state-sponsored mandates are conservative in traditional (let alone social) media usage. Limited social accountability and self-imposed confidentiality can also prompt SWFs to be secretive and particularly economical with social media uptake. Lastly, social media interaction can be deemed “trivial” or downright “frivolous” by many established SWFs. The yawning age chasm between SWFs’ average decisionmakers and social media’s average audience (i.e. SWFs’ future beneficiaries) can also furnish a plausible explanation.

Nevertheless, espousal of social media by SWFs is nowadays a natural form of enhanced social outreach. A few persuasive arguments support this claim. Firstly, SWFs owe their fiduciary mandates to societies and in most accountable political regimes their operations come under ongoing executive, legislative or (even) judicial scrutiny and oversight (the “social” dimension of SWFs work is thus evident). Secondly, SWFs ought to keep their societies comprehensively informed of their activities via effective channels of communication – given the stellar ascent of social media – this channel appears to be particularly relevant. Thirdly, SWFs must increasingly cater to “digital natives” (Barlow, 1995) – as they will represent the potential long-term beneficiaries of SWF investments as eventual asset drawdowns are performed: social media disclosures and online engagements are particularly well suited to digital natives’ needs and expectations. Lastly, social media foster standards of interactivity unachievable by other (classical) media – this factor makes them an ideal two-way communication tool for promoting meaningful dialogue via online social engagement.

Regrettably, there is scant evidence of scientific literature focused on the role played by social media in SWFs’ activities. Schena and Chaturvedi (2017) have examined that role via SWFs contributions to (co)funding innovation in social media startups. This research echoes other plentiful empirical evidence of SWFs increasingly emulating the success of private equity funds (Nowacki and Monk, 2017), however, with more exposure to private equity (venture capital) portfolio companies engaged in digital disruption.

Another genre of the social media-SWF interface examined in scholarly literature and mentioned in this paper concerns SWFs’ actions deemed noteworthy from the perspectives various stakeholders, including fellow SWFs, and covered by social media. This train of thought is also irrelevant to our Leitmotiv of SWFs’ deliberate and consistent information policymaking using social media.

Lastly (and most importantly), the author has not identified a single prior scholarly publication whose theme would touch on the social media policies of worldwide SWFs (or, broadly, SWFs’ use of social media for any

systematic information disclosure). That is a fourth argument for writing this research (in addition to the three highlighted at the beginning of this paper).

## **5. The methodology overview**

To assess SWFs' social media engagement, core activity drivers and online interaction characteristics, data have been independently compiled and reviewed by the author of this paper for the largest 100 SWFs by assets under management (SWFI, 2023). The multilingual data have been derived from the SWFs' websites, report hardcopies, traditional and social media releases, information disclosures of the SWFs' sovereigns, government agencies, regulatory bodies and numerous thinktanks which aim to cover SWF activity. In the event of discrepancies among these sources, cross- and factchecks have been made by the author to maximize data reliability. The initial assumption made and pursued throughout the paper is that all data used herein come from public sources and are in the public domain.

Appendix 1 comprises all 100 SWFs active globally. To economize space, SWF acronyms have been used throughout this appendix – which encapsulates key social media drivers for all major SWFs. The SWFs covered are: China Investment Corporation: CIC, Norway Government Pension Fund Global: NBIM, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority: ADIA, Kuwait Investment Authority: KIA, GIC Private Limited: GIC, Public Investment Fund: PIF, Hong Kong Monetary Authority Investment Portfolio: HKMA, Temasek Holdings: Temasek, Qatar Investment Authority: QIA, National Council for Social Security Fund: NCSSF, Investment Corporation of Dubai: ICD, Turkey Wealth Fund: TVF, Mubadala Investment Company: Mubadala, National Welfare Fund: NWF, Korea Investment Corporation: KIC, Abu Dhabi Developmental Holding Company: ADQ, National Development Fund of Iran: NDF, Future Fund: AFF, Alberta Investment Management Corporation: AIMCO, Emirates Investment Authority: EIA, Alaska Permanent Fund Corporation: APFC, Brunei Investment Agency: BIA, University of Texas Investment Management Company: UTIMCO, Samruk-Kazyna: SK, Libyan Investment Authority: LIA, Texas Permanent School Fund: PSF, Kazakhstan National Fund: NFRK, State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan: SOFAZ, Ethiopian Investment Holdings: EIH, Khazanah Nasional: Khazanah, New Zealand Superannuation Fund: NZSuperfund, New Mexico State Investment Council: SIC, CNIC Corporation Limited: CNIC, Hong Kong Future Fund: HKGP, Nuclear Waste Disposal Fund: KenFo, Russian Direct Investment Fund: RDIF, Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board: WBC, Fund for Reconstruction and Development of Uzbekistan: UFRD, Azerbaijan Investment Holding: AIH, Timor-Leste Petroleum Fund: TLPF, Mumtalakat Holding: Mumtalakat, Malta Government Investments: MGIS, Oman Investment Authority: OIA, Revenue Regulation Fund: RRF, Ireland Strategic Investment Fund: ISIF, Sociedad Estatal de Participaciones Industriales: SEPI, Sovereign Fund of Egypt: TSFE, NSW Generations Fund: NGF, North Dakota Legacy Fund: NDLF, Solidium: Solidium, Monaco Constitutional Reserve Fund: FRC, Hellenic Corporation of Assets and Participations S.A.: HCAP, Social and Economic Stabilization Fund: ESSF, Chile Pension Reserve Fund: PRF, Heritage and Stabilization Fund: HSF, Indonesia Investment Authority: INA, Pula Fund: PF, Vaekstfonden: VF, Oesterreichische Beteiligungs AG: OBAG, Hong Kong Investment Corporation: HKIC, Colombia Savings and Stabilization Fund: FAE, Japan Investment Corporation: JIC, Alabama Trust Fund: ATF, Regional Investment Company of Wallonia: SRIW, Idaho Endowment Fund Investment Board: EFIB, Fundo Soberano de Angola: FSDEA, Nigeria Sovereign Investment Authority: NSIA, SFPI-FPIM: SFPI-FPIM, Utah SITFO: SITFO, State Capital Investment Corporation: SCIC, Royal Bafokeng Holdings: RBH, Mauritius Investment Corporation: MIC, Sharjah Asset Management: SAM, Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust: TSET, Louisiana Education Quality Trust Fund: LEQTF, Sentosa Development Corporation: SDC, Fondo de Ahorro de Panama: FAP, Fondo Mexicano del Petroleo: FMP, Colorado Public School Fund Investment Board: PSFIB, Mexico Budgetary Income Stabilization Fund: BISF, Armenian National Interests Fund: ANIF, Western Australian Future Fund: WAFFF, Palestine Investment Fund: PIF, Senegal FONSIS: FONSIS, National Development and Social Fund (Malta): NDSF, Ghana Heritage Fund: GHF, Guyana Natural Resource Fund: NRF, Bahrain Future Generations Reserve Fund: FGF, Kiribati Revenue Equalization Reserve Fund: RERF, Israeli Citizens Fund: ICF, Fujairah Holding: Fujairah, Luxembourg Intergenerational Sovereign Fund: FSIL, Fund for Productive Industrial Revolution: FINPRO, Native Hawaiian Trust Fund: NHTF, Ghana Infrastructure Investment Fund: GIIF, Mongolia Future Heritage Fund: FHF, Agaciro Development Fund: AGDF, Ghana Stabilisation Fund: GSF, Equatorial Guinea Fund for Future Generations: LRRCN and National Fund for Hydrocarbon Reserves: FNRH.

Among the key inputs included in Appendix 1 are the following SWF-relevant data:

- domiciles (jurisdiction of incorporation) as well as principal objectives (if more than have been declared, the overriding one has been selected),

- evidence of dedicated websites (only information on SWF-specific websites has been incorporated) and online two-way communication facilities (for websites enabling such user-oriented interfacing, including chatbots),
- social media presence has been identified through the most intensely used platforms (by monthly active users, MAU) according to the latest publicly available report by Kepios (2022).

The following social media platforms have thus been selected as drivers of social media use by SWFs: Facebook (FB), YouTube (YT), WhatsApp (WA), Instagram (IG), WeChat (WC), TikTok (TT), FB Messenger (FBM), Telegram (TG), DouYin (DY), Kuaishou (KT), Sina Weibo (SW), Snapchat (SC), QQ (QQ), Twitter (TW), Pinterest (PT), Reddit (RD), Quora (QR), and LinkedIn (LI).

Such a choice has evident pros and cons. First of all, it is maximally objective, as no other bias has been applied to the platform selection process. Secondly, to assess an SWF's proactivity in social media, it is paramount to cover the most intensely used platforms on a global basis in view of stakeholder diversity both on the SWF investor and SWF investee sides. Thirdly, MAU is the key performance indicator (KPI) of social networking widely used to determine the performance, growth and popularity of online connectivity (Newberry, 2022), (Trunfio & Rossi, 2021).

Serious weaknesses of this methodology should not be ignored. Firstly, using a global ranking might exclude local platforms which interact effectively with numerous stakeholders within a given SWF and around it. Secondly (and in some part in line with the previous argument), the global choice of social media is heavily skewed toward contents in the English and Chinese languages – a problematic oversimplification in light of numerous languages and dialects used by the populations of some 100 SWFs. Thirdly, MAU related inconsistencies persist, as no absolutely uniform parameters of calculating MAUs have yet been worked out and the very terms “user” and “active” continue to spark considerable controversy.

Still, while the MAU strengths fail to outnumber the weaknesses, they do appear to outweigh them. Particular emphasis has been laid on picking a metric capturing the “stickiness” (i.e. continuity) of social media engagement – an attribute particularly relevant to the ongoing and multilateral stakeholder interconnectedness necessary to foster dialogue between an SWF and its numerous (internal and external) stakeholders.

Any further interpretation of SWFs' use of social media has to be preceded by a few caveats. In reviewing SWFs' social media strategies, additional assumptions have been made (Appendix 1).

To begin with, only SWF-operated social media accounts have been included for, i.e. this research disregards any social media presence developed or maintained by non-SWF entities (including their sponsors, i.e. sovereigns, government agencies or any other external party). After all, if an SWF's social media policy is to be deemed factual, it has to be a proprietary and independent one.

In assessing website-based two-way communication, only interfaces enabling real-time interaction between an SWFs and social media users have been incorporated. The author has purposefully excluded any claims to interaction based on untimely feedback (e.g. via email communications).

Websites and social media platforms used by the SWFs under survey have been independently and repeatedly verified by the author of this paper and, in the event of downtime, their results have been disqualified from the study. The analysis of SWFs' use of social media is therefore a snapshot in time, which is equivalent to many other forms of mainstream corporate reporting.

Linaburg-Maduell Transparency Index (LMTI, 2008, 2023) scores have been available only for a minority of SWFs, which in most cases has more to do with SWF opacity rather than deliberate omission (although the methodology and results rest entirely with SWFI, LMTI's author).

## **6. Results**

Given aforementioned general opacity of most of these funds, it would be unreasonable to anticipate SWFs' fervent uptake of social media. It is noteworthy that the LMTI average for the SWFs covered by this metric (48 funds) amounts to 7.21, however, if all the SWFs (100) were to be included with LMTIs of 0.00 (a realistic assumption), the average would drop to 3.46, a very low standard (on a scale of 1-10).

Some 78 SWFs maintain proprietary websites, albeit none of them cares to engage users in any systematic way of interactive, online dialogue (no such functionalities have been identified for any of the 100 funds under survey). For the SWFs devoid of own websites, information on them has to be gleaned from their sponsors or open-source, paywall databases, think tanks or quote vendors. Moreover, no SWF websites enable real-time,

two-way communication (e.g. through chatbots), some maintain largely unappealing online feedback forms (to which they will respond with varying degrees of promptness, regularity and candor). The prevalent social media platforms used to communicate SWF-related content online are LinkedIn (57 SWFs), Facebook (50 SWFs), Twitter (37 SWFs), YouTube (28 SWFs) and Instagram (23 SWFs) – use of other social media is negligible.

Most SWFs do not demonstrate any serious commitment to ongoing and consistent information transparency (Appendix 1). They do not routinely publish annual reports containing detailed investment policies, let alone semiannual or quarterly breakouts of their portfolios. They are also at liberty to disclose current information (e.g. via newsrooms) as they see fit – i.e. for most of them no explicit or consistent catalogue of actions that would mandate such disclosure exists. In sum, the global population of SWFs does not seem to have a consistent social media strategy.

Such a lever of opacity contradicts the very rationale of SWF creation and maintenance, as such funds are equipped and maintained with public money and place a substantial burden on the current generation (reallocation of current consumption). In other words, the current and future generations are entitled to know the costs and benefits of their SWFs' activities. By the same token, investee stakeholders have every right to know the character of SWF investment activity, including nonfinancial impacts.

Only the largest and most experienced SWFs proactively operate social media accounts, however, they rarely engage social media users in any consistent and frequent form of dialogue. Instead, they occasionally provide live streaming and webcasting, but more frequently podcasting, yet with no pretense to currency, comprehensiveness or regularity of information. That is not to say that no SWFs can use social media effectively to keep all their stakeholders adequately informed, however, online overachievers among SWFs are few and far between.

Both SWFs and their sponsors (sovereigns) should upgrade SWF reporting standards and social media might be a convenient and effective way of reaching out to present and future SWF beneficiaries.

## 7. Conclusions

Contrary to all expectations, SWFs in general are not forthcoming with comprehensive, timely and reliable information on their activity. Such an observation is particularly surprising given SWFs' provenance: as a matter of fact, they are set up by sovereigns and funded with public money, at the expense of current generations, and should feel obliged to explain how their assets are being put to efficient use. What is more – not only are large-scale and multilateral investments undertaken by SWFs important for local stakeholders but they also affect investees – entitled to comprehend the SWFs' ulterior motives. Most SWFs are way behind the curve on online social media use. Numerous SWFs do not even maintain proprietary websites and none cares to engage users online in real time. SWFs are reluctant to establish an effective, reciprocal and user-friendly presence on social media platforms. Only five major platforms are used predominantly by such funds and the content posted by SWFs often lacks the currency, comprehensiveness and in-depth coverage to enable critical, rigorous and competent scrutiny of their operations (which profoundly affects stakeholders on the investor as well as investee sides). Both SWFs and their sponsors (sovereigns) should upgrade SWF reporting standards and social media might be a convenient and effective way of reaching out to present and future SWF beneficiaries.

## References

- Aguilera, R. et al. (2016) "Sovereign Wealth Funds: A Strategic Governance View", *Academy of Management Perspectives*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 5-23.
- Al-Hassan, A. et al. (2013) "Sovereign Wealth Funds: Aspects of Governance Structures and Investment Management", *IMF Working Paper*, WP/13/231, pp. 1-34.
- Bardalai, A. (2021) "The UK as a leading centre for international sovereign wealth funds", [online], TheCityUK, <https://www.thecityuk.com/media/1igjhdz5/the-uk-as-a-leading-centre-for-international-sovereign-wealth-funds.pdf>
- Barlow, J. (1996) "Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace", [online], <http://homes.eff.org/~barlow/Declaration-Final.html>
- Bengtson, V.L. and Oyama, P.S. (2007) "Intergenerational Solidarity: Strengthening Economic and Social Ties", Expert Group Meeting, Background Paper, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Social Policy and Development, United Nations, New York, USA, pp. 1-20.
- Bharali, R. et al. (2022) "Active Management — The Landscape", *White Paper Multi-Asset Solutions*, State Street Global Advisors, pp. 1-12.
- Brundtland, G.H. (1987) "Our Common Future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development", *Transmitted to the General Assembly as an Annex to document A/42/427 - Development and International Cooperation: Environment*, pp. 1-247.

- Carney, M. et al. (2010) "Corporate governance and stakeholder conflict", *Journal of Management & Governance*, Vol. 15, pp. 483-507.
- Cottarelli, C. (2011) "The Challenge of Public Pension Reform in Advanced and Emerging Economies", Fiscal Affairs Department, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, USA, pp. 1-71.
- Dixon, A.D., (2014), "Enhancing the Transparency Dialogue in the 'Santiago Principles' for Sovereign Wealth Funds", *Seattle University Law Review*, Vol. 37, Iss. 2, pp. 581-585.
- Funds Europe (2022) 35% of active funds outperformed passive peers in year to June 2022
- International Working Group of Sovereign Wealth Funds (IWG) (2008) "Generally Accepted Principles and Practices – Santiago Principles", London, UK, pp. 1-52.
- Kepios (2022) "The World's Most Used Social Platforms – Ranking of Social Media Platforms by Global Active User Figures (In Millions)", *Digital 2022: October 2022 Global Statshot Report by Simon Kemp*, [online], <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-october-global-statshot>
- LMTI (2008, 2023), Linaburg-Maduell Transparency Index, methodology and ratings, [online], <https://www.swfinstitute.org/research/linaburg-maduell-transparency-index>
- Newberry, C. (2022), "16 Key Social Media Metrics to Track in 2023 (Benchmarks)", blog, [online], <https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-metrics/>
- Nowacki, C. and Monk, A. (2017) "Sovereign Wealth Funds and Private Equity", Stanford Global Projects Center/CDC International Capital, pp. 1-14.
- Schena, P.J. and Schankar, J. (2017) "Financing of the digital ecosystem: The "disruptive" role of sovereign wealth funds... Reconsidered", *Sovereign wealth funds 2015*, The Fletcher School, Tufts University, pp. 1008-119.
- Sharma, R. (2017) "Sovereign Wealth Funds Investment in Sustainable Development Sectors", background paper, [online], [https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/high-level-conference-on-ffd-and-2030-agenda/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/11/Background-Paper\\_Sovereign-Wealth-Funds.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/ffd/high-level-conference-on-ffd-and-2030-agenda/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/11/Background-Paper_Sovereign-Wealth-Funds.pdf)
- SWFI (2023), Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute, fund ranking database, [online], <https://www.swfinstitute.org/fund-rankings/sovereign-wealth-fund>
- Truman, E.M. (2007) "A Scoreboard for Sovereign Wealth Funds", Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE), Presented at the Conference on China's Exchange Rate Policy, October 19, 2007, at the Peterson Institute, Washington, DC, USA, pp. 1-15.
- Trunfio, M. and Rossi, S. (2021) "Conceptualising and measuring social media engagement: A systematic literature review", *Italian Journal of Marketing*, Springer, vol. 2021(3), pp. 267-292.
- Wiśniewski, P. (2018) *Państwowe fundusze majątkowe jako globalny inwestor alternatywny (Sovereign Wealth Funds as a Global Alternative Investor)*, SGH Publishing House, Warsaw, Poland.
- Wiśniewski, P. (2023) "Mechanizmy interwencji Państwowych Funduszy Majątkowych (PFM) w walce z następstwami Pandemii COVID-19" ("Sovereign Wealth Funds' Interventionism Mechanism vis-à-vis the Aftermath of COVID-19 Pandemic"), SGH Publishing House, Warsaw, Poland, pp. 1-15.

## Appendix

**Appendix 1:** Top 100 SWFs' domiciles (by assets under management in US\$), objectives, general transparency ratings (LMTI) , online connectivity via proprietary websites and 18 biggest social media platforms (by monthly active users, MAU, on October 1, 2022) as of January 15, 2023

Rank	SWF	Objective(s)	LMTI (1-10)	Website (w) and 2-way communication (2-way)	Social media presence (SM)
1	CIC	f/x reserve management	7	w	FB, LI
2	NBIM	intergenerational solidarity	10	w	FB, YT, LI
3	ADIA	socioeconomic development	6	w	FB, IG, LI
4	KIA	intergenerational solidarity	6	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI
5	GIC	intergenerational solidarity	7	w	FB, YT, IG, WC, LI
6	PIF	socioeconomic development	6	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI
7	HKMA	f/x reserve management	8	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI
8	Temasek	intergenerational solidarity	10	w	FB, YT, WA, IG, WC, TG, TW, PT, LI
9	QIA	intergenerational solidarity	5	w	FB, TW, LI
10	NCSSF	socioeconomic development	5	w	FB, LI
11	ICD	socioeconomic development	5	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI

Rank	SWF	Objective(s)	LMTI (1-10)	Website (w) and 2-way communication (2-way)	Social media presence (SM)
12	TVF	socioeconomic development	6	w	YT, TW, LI
13	Mubadala	socioeconomic development	10	w	FB, YT, IG, TW
14	NWF	retirement security	n/a	n/a	n/a
15	KIC	socioeconomic development	8	w	FB, LI
16	ADQ	direct investment	5	w	IG, TW, LI
17	NDF	intergenerational solidarity	4	w	YT, LI
18	AFF	intergenerational solidarity	10	w	LI
19	AIMCO	intergenerational solidarity	10	w	FB, TW, LI
20	EIA	f/x reserve management	10	w	FB, LI
21	APFC	f/x reserve management	10	w	FB, LI
22	BIA	f/x reserve management	1	w	FB, LI
23	UTIMCO	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	FB, LI
24	SK	socioeconomic development	10	w	FB, YT, WA, IG, TT, TG., TW, LI
25	LIA	intergenerational solidarity	4	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI
26	PSF	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	LI
27	NFRK	socioeconomic development	6	n/a	FB
28	SOFAZ	intergenerational solidarity	10	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI
29	EIH	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	w	FB, YT, TW, LI
30	Khazanah	socioeconomic development	6	w	FB, YT, IG, TT, TW, LI
31	NZSuperfund	retirement security	10	w	TW, LI
32	SIC	intergenerational solidarity	9	w	FB, YT, TW, LI
33	CNIC	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	FB, TW
34	HKGP	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	FB
35	KenFo	n/a	n/a	w	LI
36	RDIF	direct investment	7	w	FB, IG, TW, LI
37	WBC	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	w	n/a
38	UFRD	socioeconomic development	n/a	n/a	FB
39	AIH	direct investment	n/a	w	FB, TW, LI
40	TLPF	intergenerational solidarity	9	n/a	n/a
41	Mumtalakat	direct investment	10	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI
42	MGIS	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	w	LI
43	OIA	f/x reserve management	4	w	YT, IG, WC, TW, LI
44	RRF	macroeconomic stabilization	1	n/a	n/a
45	ISIF	socioeconomic development	8	w	YT
46	SEPI	direct investment	n/a	w	LI
47	TSFE	direct investment	4	w	LI
48	NGF	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	n/a	n/a
49	NDLF	intergenerational solidarity	10	n/a	n/a
50	Solidium	direct investment	n/a	w	LI
51	FRC	socioeconomic development	n/a	n/a	n/a
52	HCAP	direct investment	n/a	w	n/a

Rank	SWF	Objective(s)	LMTI (1-10)	Website (w) and 2-way communication (2-way)	Social media presence (SM)
53	ESSF	macroeconomic stabilization	10	w	n/a
54	PRF	retirement security	10	w	n/a
55	HSF	macroeconomic stabilization	7	w	n/a
56	IIA	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	w	LI
57	PF	intergenerational solidarity	6	n/a	FB
58	VF	direct investment	n/a	w	FB, YT, IG, TW
59	OBAG	direct investment	n/a	w	FB, YT, WA, LI
60	HKIC	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	n/a
61	FAE	macroeconomic stabilization	3	w	FB
62	JIC	direct investment	n/a	w	FB, LI
63	ATF	intergenerational solidarity	9	w	n/a
64	SRIW	direct investment	n/a	w	FB, TW,
65	EFIB	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	FB
66	FSDEA	socioeconomic development	3	w	FB, IG, TW, LI
67	NSIA	socioeconomic development	9	w	FB, YT, TW, LI
68	SFPI-FPIM	direct investment	n/a	w	LI
69	SITFO	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	LI
70	SCIC	direct investment	4	w	FB, LI
71	RBH	direct investment	n/a	w	LI
72	MIC	socioeconomic development	8	w	TW, LI
73	SAM	f/x reserve management	n/a	w	FB, YT, WA, IG, TW, LI
74	TSET	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	FB, YT, TW, KI
75	LEQTF	socioeconomic development	n/a	n/a	n/a
76	SDC	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	FB, WA, LI
77	FAP	macroeconomic stabilization	10	w	TW, LI
78	FMP	macroeconomic stabilization	n/a	w	FB, TW, LI
79	PSFIB	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	n/a
80	BISF	macroeconomic stabilization	n/a	w	TW
81	ANIF	direct investment	n/a	w	FB, YT, IG, TW, LI
82	WAFFF	intergenerational solidarity	10	w	FB, YT, IG, KT, TW, LI
83	PIF	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	YT, IG, TW, LI
84	FONSIS	direct investment	n/a	w	TW, I
85	NDSF	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	n/a
86	GHF	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	n/a	n/a
87	NRF	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	w	n/a
88	FGF	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	n/a	n/a
89	RERF	macroeconomic stabilization	n/a	n/a	n/a
90	ICF	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	n/a	n/a
91	Fujairah	direct investment	n/a	w	FB, LI
92	FSIL	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	n/a	n/a
93	FINPRO	socioeconomic development	n/a	n/a	n/a

Rank	SWF	Objective(s)	LMTI (1-10)	Website (w) and 2-way communication (2-way)	Social media presence (SM)
94	NHTF	socioeconomic development	n/a	n/a	n/a
95	GIIF	socioeconomic development	n/a	n/a	FB, LI
96	FHF	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	n/a	n/a
97	AGDF	socioeconomic development	n/a	w	FB, YT, IG, TW
98	GSF	macroeconomic stabilization	n/a	n/a	n/a
99	LRRCN	intergenerational solidarity	n/a	n/a	n/a
100	FRGF	macroeconomic stabilization	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: online information disclosure of SWFs and their sponsors, resources available on: Facebook (FB), YouTube (YT), WhatsApp (WA), Instagram (IG), WeChat (WC), TikTok (TT), FB Messenger (FBM), Telegram (TG), DouYin (DY), Kuaishou (KT), Sina Weibo (SW), Snapchat (SC), QQ (QQ), Twitter (TW), Pinterest (PT), Reddit (RD), Quora (QR), and LinkedIn (LI). LMTI (2023).