

June 30, 2023

Semiannual Report

Deutsche DWS Variable Series II

DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP



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This report must be preceded or accompanied by a prospectus. To obtain an additional prospectus or summary prospectus, if available, call (800) 728-3337 or your financial representative. We advise you to consider the Fund's objectives, risks, charges and expenses carefully before investing. The summary prospectus and prospectus contain this and other important information about the Fund. Please read the prospectus carefully before you invest.

Stocks may decline in value. Smaller and medium company stocks tend to be more volatile than large company stocks. The impact of the use of quantitative models and the analysis of specific metrics on a stock's performance can be difficult to predict, and stocks that previously possessed certain desirable quantitative characteristics may not continue to demonstrate those same characteristics in the future. Quantitative models also entail the risk that the models themselves may be limited or incorrect. Investing in foreign securities presents certain risks, such as currency fluctuations, political and economic changes, and market risks. The Fund may lend securities to approved institutions. Please read the prospectus for details.

War, terrorism, sanctions, economic uncertainty, trade disputes, public health crises, natural disasters, climate change and related geopolitical events have led and, in the future, may lead to significant disruptions in U.S. and world economies and markets, which may lead to increased market volatility and may have significant adverse effects on the Fund and its investments.

The brand DWS represents DWS Group GmbH & Co. KGaA and any of its subsidiaries such as DWS Distributors, Inc. which offers investment products or DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. and RREEF America L.L.C. which offer advisory services.

DWS Distributors, Inc., 222 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606, (800) 621-1148

NOT FDIC/NCUA INSURED NO BANK GUARANTEE MAY LOSE VALUE
NOT A DEPOSIT NOT INSURED BY ANY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY

Performance Summary

June 30, 2023 (Unaudited)

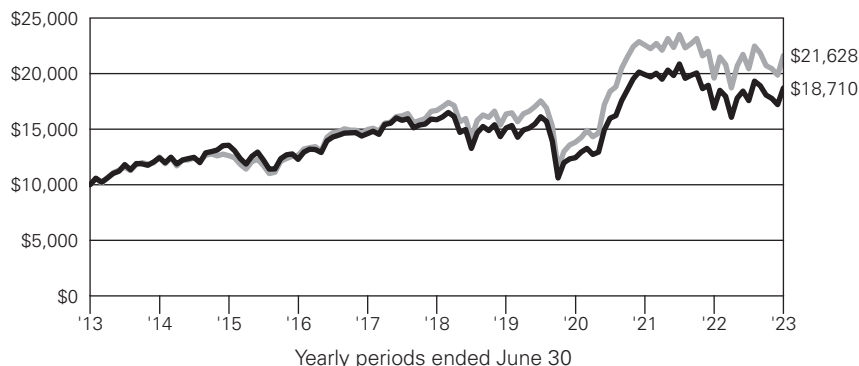
Fund performance shown is historical, assumes reinvestment of all dividend and capital gain distributions, and does not guarantee future results. Investment return and principal value fluctuate with changing market conditions so that, when redeemed, shares may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be lower or higher than the performance data quoted. Please contact your participating insurance company for the Fund's most recent month-end performance. Performance does not reflect charges and fees ("contract charges") associated with the separate account that invests in the Fund or any variable life insurance policy or variable annuity contract for which the Fund is an investment option. These charges and fees will reduce returns. While all share classes have the same underlying portfolio, their performance will differ.

The gross expense ratios of the Fund, as stated in the fee table of each prospectus dated May 1, 2023 are 0.87% and 1.24% for Class A and Class B shares, respectively, and may differ from the expense ratios disclosed in the Financial Highlights tables in this report.

Generally accepted accounting principles require adjustments to be made to the net assets of the Fund at period end for financial reporting purposes only, and as such, the total return based on the unadjusted net asset value per share may differ from the total return reported in the financial highlights.

Growth of an Assumed \$10,000 Investment

■ DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP — Class A
 ■ Russell 2500™ Value Index



Russell 2500™ Value Index is an unmanaged index measuring the small- to mid-cap U.S. equity value market.

Index returns do not reflect any fees or expenses and it is not possible to invest directly into an index.

Comparative Results

DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP		6-Month*	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	10-Year
Class A	Growth of \$10,000	\$10,649	\$11,075	\$15,049	\$11,804	\$18,710
	Average annual total return	6.49%	10.75%	14.60%	3.37%	6.47%
Russell 2500 Value Index	Growth of \$10,000	\$10,583	\$11,037	\$15,639	\$12,961	\$21,628
	Average annual total return	5.83%	10.37%	16.07%	5.32%	8.02%
DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP		6-Month*	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	10-Year
Class B	Growth of \$10,000	\$10,632	\$11,031	\$14,868	\$11,585	\$18,039
	Average annual total return	6.32%	10.31%	14.14%	2.99%	6.08%
Russell 2500 Value Index	Growth of \$10,000	\$10,583	\$11,037	\$15,639	\$12,961	\$21,628
	Average annual total return	5.83%	10.37%	16.07%	5.32%	8.02%

The growth of \$10,000 is cumulative.

* Total returns shown for periods less than one year are not annualized.

Portfolio Summary

(Unaudited)

Asset Allocation (As a % of Investment Portfolio excluding Securities Lending Collateral)	6/30/23	12/31/22
Common Stocks	99%	100%
Cash Equivalents	1%	—
	100%	100%

Sector Diversification (As a % of Investment Portfolio excluding Securities Lending Collateral and Cash Equivalents)	6/30/23	12/31/22
Financials	21%	21%
Industrials	19%	17%
Consumer Discretionary	12%	12%
Real Estate	10%	12%
Health Care	9%	7%
Information Technology	9%	8%
Materials	6%	6%
Energy	4%	5%
Utilities	4%	5%
Communication Services	3%	4%
Consumer Staples	3%	3%
	100%	100%

Portfolio holdings and characteristics are subject to change.

For more complete details about the Fund's investment portfolio, see page 5.

Following the Fund's fiscal first and third quarter-end, a complete portfolio holdings listing is posted on [dws.com](https://www.dws.com) and is available free of charge by contacting your financial intermediary or, if you are a direct investor, by calling (800) 728-3337. In addition, the portfolio holdings listing is filed with the SEC on the Fund's Form N-PORT and will be available on the SEC's Web site at [sec.gov](https://www.sec.gov). Additional portfolio holdings for the Fund are also posted on [dws.com](https://www.dws.com) from time to time. Please see the Fund's current prospectus for more information.

Portfolio Management Team

Pankaj Bhatnagar, PhD, Head of Investment Strategy Equity

Arno V. Puskar, Senior Portfolio Manager Equity

Investment Portfolio

as of June 30, 2023 (Unaudited)

	Shares	Value (\$)		Shares	Value (\$)
Common Stocks 99.2%			Energy 4.0%		
Communication Services 3.3%			Energy Equipment & Services 0.7%		
Diversified Telecommunication Services 0.9%			Nabors Industries Ltd.*		
Liberty Latin America Ltd. "A"*	83,215	728,131		2,550	237,226
Media 2.4%			NexTier Oilfield Solutions, Inc.*		
Interpublic Group of Companies, Inc.	39,760	1,533,941		32,324	288,977
Nexstar Media Group, Inc.	2,193	365,244			526,203
		1,899,185	Oil, Gas & Consumable Fuels 3.3%		
Consumer Discretionary 11.7%			Devon Energy Corp.		
Automobile Components 2.5%			HF Sinclair Corp.		
American Axle & Manufacturing Holdings, Inc.*	63,862	528,138		12,253	546,607
Lear Corp.	9,816	1,409,087		12,422	436,509
		1,937,225		7,559	537,747
Automobiles 0.6%			Targa Resources Corp.		
Winnebago Industries, Inc.	6,930	462,162		6,942	528,286
Diversified Consumer Services 0.8%			Vertex Energy, Inc.* (a)		
WW International, Inc.*	97,318	653,977		45,735	285,844
Hotels, Restaurants & Leisure 0.8%					2,649,928
International Game Technology PLC	19,871	633,686	Financials 20.9%		
Household Durables 3.5%			Banks 9.6%		
Mohawk Industries, Inc.*	7,898	814,758	Associated Banc-Corp.		
PulteGroup, Inc.	25,190	1,956,759		50,702	822,893
		2,771,517	BankUnited, Inc.		
Specialty Retail 1.7%			Columbia Banking System, Inc.		
Foot Locker, Inc.	10,718	290,565		13,657	276,964
RH*	3,239	1,067,542		21,907	463,552
		1,358,107		61,996	760,691
Textiles, Apparel & Luxury Goods 1.8%			Eastern Bankshares, Inc.		
Columbia Sportswear Co.	18,579	1,435,042		73,164	894,064
Consumer Staples 2.8%			First BanCorp.		
Consumer Staples Distribution & Retail 0.5%			First Financial Corp.		
Performance Food Group Co.*	6,533	393,548		10,968	356,131
Food Products 1.9%			First Horizon Corp.		
B&G Foods, Inc. (a)	38,062	529,823		29,685	334,550
Cal-Maine Foods, Inc.	6,988	314,460		21,539	256,745
Darling Ingredients, Inc.*	10,608	676,684		23,244	892,105
		1,520,967		25,784	811,165
Household Products 0.4%			Simmons First National Corp. "A"		
Central Garden & Pet Co.*	7,995	309,966		30,569	527,315
			UMB Financial Corp.		
				14,217	865,815
					7,591,080
			Capital Markets 1.2%		
			Evercore, Inc. "A"		
				3,114	384,859
			Invesco Ltd.		
				23,343	392,396
			Robinhood Markets, Inc. "A"*		
				20,979	209,370
					986,625
			Consumer Finance 0.9%		
			Credit Acceptance Corp.* (a)		
				1,410	716,181
			Financial Services 3.2%		
			A-Mark Precious Metals, Inc.		
				19,638	735,149
			AvidXchange Holdings, Inc.*		
				71,323	740,333
			Voya Financial, Inc.		
				14,340	1,028,321
					2,503,803
			Insurance 5.1%		
			Assurant, Inc.		
				9,089	1,142,669
			Brown & Brown, Inc.		
				23,705	1,631,852
			Everest Re Group Ltd.		
				3,840	1,312,743
					4,087,264

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

	Shares	Value (\$)		Shares	Value (\$)
Mortgage Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) 0.9%			Ground Transportation 1.3%		
Rithm Capital Corp.	74,134	693,153	Knight-Swift Transportation Holdings, Inc.	10,885	604,770
Health Care 9.1%			RXO, Inc.*	18,131	411,030
Biotechnology 2.5%					1,015,800
EQRx, Inc.*	162,588	302,414	Machinery 3.6%		
Kiniksa Pharmaceuticals Ltd. "A"*	17,369	244,556	Hillenbrand, Inc.	40,752	2,089,763
Sage Therapeutics, Inc.*	10,224	480,732	The Manitowoc Co., Inc.*	42,427	798,900
Sana Biotechnology, Inc.* (a)	76,915	458,413			2,888,663
Twist Bioscience Corp.*	22,683	464,094	Professional Services 2.4%		
		1,950,209	Jacobs Solutions, Inc.	10,424	1,239,309
Health Care Equipment & Supplies 1.7%			ManpowerGroup, Inc.	3,398	269,801
Cue Health, Inc.*	757,180	279,399	TrueBlue, Inc.*	21,709	384,467
ICU Medical, Inc.*	1,845	328,761			1,893,577
Merit Medical Systems, Inc.*	9,064	758,113	Trading Companies & Distributors 1.2%		
		1,366,273	NOW, Inc.*	92,675	960,113
Health Care Providers & Services 2.6%			Information Technology 8.3%		
Chemed Corp.	1,231	666,796	Communications Equipment 0.4%		
Molina Healthcare, Inc.*	1,292	389,202	Ciena Corp.*	7,945	337,583
NeoGenomics, Inc.*	35,864	576,334	Electronic Equipment, Instruments & Components 3.4%		
Owens & Minor, Inc.*	22,239	423,431	Avnet, Inc.	33,437	1,686,897
		2,055,763	Itron, Inc.*	9,376	676,009
Pharmaceuticals 2.3%			TD SYNEX Corp.	3,829	359,926
Jazz Pharmaceuticals PLC*	4,726	585,882			2,722,832
Ligand Pharmaceuticals, Inc.*	6,006	433,033	Semiconductors & Semiconductor Equipment 2.1%		
Reata Pharmaceuticals, Inc. "A"*	8,166	832,605	Cirrus Logic, Inc.*	11,969	969,609
		1,851,520	Photronics, Inc.*	26,946	694,937
Industrials 19.2%					1,664,546
Aerospace & Defense 1.7%			Software 2.4%		
Huntington Ingalls Industries, Inc.	5,832	1,327,363	Adeia, Inc.	33,819	372,347
Air Freight & Logistics 0.4%			NCR Corp.*	12,880	324,576
GXO Logistics, Inc.*	5,515	346,452	Porch Group, Inc.* (a)	191,004	263,586
Building Products 3.6%			Verint Systems, Inc.*	26,229	919,589
Carlisle Companies, Inc.	6,936	1,779,292			1,880,098
Owens Corning	8,057	1,051,439	Materials 6.1%		
		2,830,731	Chemicals 1.7%		
Construction & Engineering 1.2%			Avient Corp.	7,871	321,924
API Group Corp.*	17,486	476,668	Chemours Co.	20,651	761,815
MasTec, Inc.*	4,377	516,355	Sensient Technologies Corp.	3,558	253,081
		993,023			1,336,820
Electrical Equipment 3.8%			Containers & Packaging 1.0%		
Encore Wire Corp.	6,753	1,255,585	Graphic Packaging Holding Co.	33,885	814,257
EnerSys	15,947	1,730,569	Metals & Mining 3.4%		
		2,986,154	Cleveland-Cliffs, Inc.*	22,180	371,737
			Steel Dynamics, Inc.	21,265	2,316,396
					2,688,133

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Fair Value Measurements

Various inputs are used in determining the value of the Fund's investments. These inputs are summarized in three broad levels. Level 1 includes quoted prices in active markets for identical securities. Level 2 includes other significant observable inputs (including quoted prices for similar securities, interest rates, prepayment speeds and credit risk). Level 3 includes significant unobservable inputs (including the Fund's own assumptions in determining the fair value of investments). The level assigned to the securities valuations may not be an indication of the risk or liquidity associated with investing in those securities.

The following is a summary of the inputs used as of June 30, 2023 in valuing the Fund's investments. For information on the Fund's policy regarding the valuation of investments, please refer to the Security Valuation section of Note A in the accompanying Notes to Financial Statements.

Assets	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Common Stocks (a)	\$ 78,752,038	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 78,752,038
Short-Term Investments (a)	2,995,840	—	—	2,995,840
Total	\$ 81,747,878	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 81,747,878

(a) See Investment Portfolio for additional detailed categorizations.

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

as of June 30, 2023 (Unaudited)

Assets	
Investments in non-affiliated securities, at value (cost \$67,189,889) — including \$2,304,410 of securities loaned	\$ 78,752,038
Investment in DWS Government & Agency Securities Portfolio (cost \$2,369,873)*	2,369,873
Investment in DWS Central Cash Management Government Fund (cost \$625,967)	625,967
Receivable for Fund shares sold	32,902
Dividends receivable	117,492
Interest receivable	3,165
Other assets	832
Total assets	81,902,269
Liabilities	
Payable upon return of securities loaned	2,369,873
Payable for Fund shares redeemed	41,657
Accrued management fee	37,368
Accrued Trustees' fees	1,397
Other accrued expenses and payables	65,155
Total liabilities	2,515,450
Net assets, at value	\$ 79,386,819
Net Assets Consist of	
Distributable earnings (loss)	13,781,689
Paid-in capital	65,605,130
Net assets, at value	\$ 79,386,819
Net Asset Value	
Class A	
Net Asset Value , offering and redemption price per share (\$63,779,700 ÷ 4,965,473 outstanding shares of beneficial interest, no par value, unlimited number of shares authorized)	\$ 12.84
Class B	
Net Asset Value , offering and redemption price per share (\$15,607,119 ÷ 1,213,181 outstanding shares of beneficial interest, no par value, unlimited number of shares authorized)	\$ 12.86

* Represents collateral on securities loaned.

Statement of Operations

for the six months ended June 30, 2023 (Unaudited)

Investment Income	
Income:	
Dividends (net of foreign taxes withheld of \$926)	\$ 812,714
Non cash dividends	150,875
Income distributions — DWS Central Cash Management Government Fund	20,366
Securities lending income, net of borrower rebates	19,276
Total income	1,003,231
Expenses:	
Management fee	258,733
Administration fee	38,611
Services to shareholders	1,160
Record keeping fee (Class B)	8,813
Distribution service fee (Class B)	19,614
Custodian fee	1,328
Professional fees	25,576
Reports to shareholders	16,262
Trustees' fees and expenses	2,716
Other	5,027
Total expenses before expense reductions	377,840
Expense reductions	(26,641)
Total expenses after expense reductions	351,199
Net investment income	652,032
Realized and Unrealized Gain (Loss)	
Net realized gain (loss) from investments	1,693,696
Change in net unrealized appreciation (depreciation) on investments	2,639,249
Net gain (loss)	4,332,945
Net increase (decrease) in net assets resulting from operations	\$4,984,977

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Statements of Changes in Net Assets

	Six Months Ended June 30, 2023 (Unaudited)	Year Ended December 31, 2022
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets		
Operations:		
Net investment income	\$ 652,032	\$ 936,675
Net realized gain (loss)	1,693,696	3,139,256
Change in net unrealized appreciation (depreciation)	2,639,249	(20,152,339)
Net increase (decrease) in net assets resulting from operations	4,984,977	(16,076,408)
Distributions to shareholders:		
Class A	(3,252,643)	(1,631,110)
Class B	(744,290)	(353,137)
Total distributions	(3,996,933)	(1,984,247)
Fund share transactions:		
Class A		
Proceeds from shares sold	1,171,673	3,556,679
Reinvestment of distributions	3,252,643	1,631,110
Payments for shares redeemed	(5,051,375)	(8,973,908)
Net increase (decrease) in net assets from Class A share transactions	(627,059)	(3,786,119)
Class B		
Proceeds from shares sold	549,324	1,142,137
Reinvestment of distributions	744,290	353,137
Payments for shares redeemed	(1,505,238)	(3,381,561)
Net increase (decrease) in net assets from Class B share transactions	(211,624)	(1,886,287)
Increase (decrease) in net assets	149,361	(23,733,061)
Net assets at beginning of period	79,237,458	102,970,519
Net assets at end of period	\$79,386,819	\$ 79,237,458
Other Information		
Class A		
Shares outstanding at beginning of period	5,000,004	5,282,801
Shares sold	90,557	260,559
Shares issued to shareholders in reinvestment of distributions	271,506	119,671
Shares redeemed	(396,594)	(663,027)
Net increase (decrease) in Class A shares	(34,531)	(282,797)
Shares outstanding at end of period	4,965,473	5,000,004
Class B		
Shares outstanding at beginning of period	1,226,929	1,372,395
Shares sold	42,514	83,227
Shares issued to shareholders in reinvestment of distributions	61,972	25,852
Shares redeemed	(118,234)	(254,545)
Net increase (decrease) in Class B shares	(13,748)	(145,466)
Shares outstanding at end of period	1,213,181	1,226,929

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Financial Highlights

DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP — Class A

	Six Months Ended 6/30/23 (Unaudited)	2022	Years Ended December 31,			
			2021	2020	2019	2018
Selected Per Share Data						
Net asset value, beginning of period	\$12.73	\$15.47	\$12.00	\$13.83	\$12.21	\$17.88
<i>Income (loss) from investment operations:</i>						
Net investment income ^a	.11	.15	.11	.16	.18	.10
Net realized and unrealized gain (loss)	.66	(2.57)	3.54	(.90)	2.53 ^b	(2.47)
Total from investment operations	.77	(2.42)	3.65	(.74)	2.71	(2.37)
<i>Less distributions from:</i>						
Net investment income	(.15)	(.12)	(.18)	(.16)	(.10)	(.24)
Net realized gains	(.51)	(.20)	—	(.93)	(.99)	(3.06)
Total distributions	(.66)	(.32)	(.18)	(1.09)	(1.09)	(3.30)
Net asset value, end of period	\$12.84	\$12.73	\$15.47	\$12.00	\$13.83	\$12.21
Total Return (%) ^c	6.49*	(15.80)	30.50	(1.80)	22.76 ^b	(16.01)
Ratios to Average Net Assets and Supplemental Data						
Net assets, end of period (\$ millions)	64	64	82	70	78	70
Ratio of expenses before expense reductions (%) ^d	.88**	.87	.85	.88	.88	.87
Ratio of expenses after expense reductions (%) ^d	.81**	.83	.83	.82	.83	.81
Ratio of net investment income (%)	1.71**	1.14	.76	1.57	1.35	.65
Portfolio turnover rate (%)	13*	33	32	43	55	64

^a Based on average shares outstanding during the period.

^b Includes proceeds from a non-recurring litigation payment amounting to \$0.14 per share and 1.07% of average daily net assets, for the year ended December 31, 2019.

^c Total return would have been lower had certain expenses not been reduced.

^d Expense ratio does not reflect charges and fees associated with the separate account that invests in the Fund or any variable life insurance policy or variable annuity contract for which the Fund is an investment option.

* Not annualized

** Annualized

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP — Class B

	Six Months Ended 6/30/23 (Unaudited)	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Selected Per Share Data						
Net asset value, beginning of period	\$12.72	\$15.46	\$11.99	\$13.82	\$12.20	\$17.86
<i>Income (loss) from investment operations:</i>						
Net investment income ^a	.09	.10	.06	.13	.13	.05
Net realized and unrealized gain (loss)	.67	(2.58)	3.53	(.90)	2.53 ^b	(2.48)
Total from investment operations	.76	(2.48)	3.59	(.77)	2.66	(2.43)
<i>Less distributions from:</i>						
Net investment income	(.11)	(.06)	(.12)	(.13)	(.05)	(.17)
Net realized gains	(.51)	(.20)	—	(.93)	(.99)	(3.06)
Total distributions	(.62)	(.26)	(.12)	(1.06)	(1.04)	(3.23)
Net asset value, end of period	\$12.86	\$12.72	\$15.46	\$11.99	\$13.82	\$12.20
Total Return (%) ^c	6.32*	(16.14)	30.04	(2.18)	22.32 ^b	(16.32)
Ratios to Average Net Assets and Supplemental Data						
Net assets, end of period (\$ millions)	16	16	21	17	17	15
Ratio of expenses before expense reductions (%) ^d	1.24**	1.24	1.22	1.25	1.25	1.24
Ratio of expenses after expense reductions (%) ^d	1.18**	1.20	1.20	1.19	1.19	1.16
Ratio of net investment income (%)	1.35**	.77	.40	1.21	.99	.30
Portfolio turnover rate (%)	13*	33	32	43	55	64

^a Based on average shares outstanding during the period.

^b Includes proceeds from a non-recurring litigation payment amounting to \$0.14 per share and 1.07% of average daily net assets, for the year ended December 31, 2019.

^c Total return would have been lower had certain expenses not been reduced.

^d Expense ratio does not reflect charges and fees associated with the separate account that invests in the Fund or any variable life insurance policy or variable annuity contract for which the Fund is an investment option.

* Not annualized

** Annualized

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Notes to Financial Statements

(Unaudited)

A. Organization and Significant Accounting Policies

DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP (the "Fund") is a diversified series of Deutsche DWS Variable Series II (the "Trust"), which is registered under the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended (the "1940 Act"), as an open-end management investment company organized as a Massachusetts business trust.

Multiple Classes of Shares of Beneficial Interest. The Fund offers two classes of shares (Class A shares and Class B shares). Class B shares are subject to Rule 12b-1 distribution fees under the 1940 Act and recordkeeping fees equal to an annual rate of up to 0.25% and of up to 0.15%, respectively, of the average daily net assets of the Class B shares of the Fund. Class A shares are not subject to such fees.

Investment income, realized and unrealized gains and losses, and certain fund-level expenses and expense reductions, if any, are borne pro rata on the basis of relative net assets by the holders of all classes of shares, except that each class bears certain expenses unique to that class (including the applicable 12b-1 distribution fees and recordkeeping fees). Differences in class-level expenses may result in payment of different per share dividends by class. All shares have equal rights with respect to voting subject to class-specific arrangements.

The Fund's financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("U.S. GAAP") which require the use of management estimates. Actual results could differ from those estimates. The Fund qualifies as an investment company under Topic 946 of Accounting Standards Codification of U.S. GAAP. The policies described below are followed consistently by the Fund in the preparation of its financial statements.

Security Valuation. Investments are stated at value determined as of the close of regular trading on the New York Stock Exchange on each day the exchange is open for trading.

The Fund's Board has designated DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. (the "Advisor") as the valuation designee for the Fund pursuant to Rule 2a-5 under the 1940 Act. The Advisor's Pricing Committee (the "Pricing Committee") typically values securities using readily available market quotations or prices supplied by independent pricing services (which are considered fair values under Rule 2a-5). The Advisor has adopted fair valuation procedures that provide methodologies for fair valuing securities.

Various inputs are used in determining the value of the Fund's investments. These inputs are summarized in three broad levels. Level 1 includes quoted prices in active markets for identical securities. Level 2 includes other significant observable inputs (including quoted prices for similar securities, interest rates, prepayment speeds and credit risk). Level 3 includes significant unobservable inputs (including the Fund's own assumptions in determining the fair value of investments). The level assigned to the securities valuations may not be an indication of the risk or liquidity associated with investing in those securities.

Equity securities are valued at the most recent sale price or official closing price reported on the exchange (U.S. or foreign) or over-the-counter market on which they trade. Securities for which no sales are reported are valued at the calculated mean between the most recent bid and asked quotations on the relevant market or, if a mean cannot be determined, at the most recent bid quotation. Equity securities are generally categorized as Level 1.

Investments in open-end investment companies are valued at their net asset value each business day and are categorized as Level 1.

Securities and other assets for which market quotations are not readily available or for which the above valuation procedures are deemed not to reflect fair value are valued in a manner that is intended to reflect their fair value as determined in accordance with procedures approved by the Pricing Committee and are generally categorized as Level 3. In accordance with the Fund's valuation procedures, factors considered in determining value may include, but are not limited to, the type of the security; the size of the holding; the initial cost of the security; the existence of any contractual restrictions on the security's disposition; the price and extent of public trading in similar securities of the issuer or of comparable companies; quotations or evaluated prices from broker-dealers and/or pricing services; information obtained from the issuer, analysts, and/or the appropriate stock exchange (for exchange-traded securities); an analysis of the company's or issuer's financial statements; an evaluation of the forces that influence the issuer and the market(s) in which the security is purchased and sold; and with respect to debt securities, the maturity, coupon, creditworthiness, currency denomination and the movement of the market in which the security is normally traded. The value determined under these procedures may differ from published values for the same securities.

Disclosure about the classification of fair value measurements is included in a table following the Fund's Investment Portfolio.

Securities Lending. Prior to May 1, 2023, Brown Brothers Harriman & Co., served as securities lending agent for the Fund. Effective May 1, 2023, National Financial Services LLC (Fidelity Agency Lending), as securities lending agent, lends securities of the Fund to certain financial institutions under the terms of its securities lending agreement. During the term of the loans, the Fund continues to receive interest and dividends generated by the securities and to participate in any changes in their market value. The Fund requires the borrowers of the securities to maintain collateral with the Fund consisting of either cash or liquid, unencumbered assets having a value at least equal to the value of the securities loaned. When the collateral falls below specified amounts, the securities lending agent will use its best efforts to obtain additional collateral on the next business day to meet required amounts under the securities lending agreement. During the six months ended June 30, 2023, the Fund invested the cash collateral into a joint trading account in affiliated money market funds, including DWS Government & Agency Securities Portfolio, managed by DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. receives a management/administration fee (0.07% annualized effective rate as of June 30, 2023) on the cash collateral invested in DWS Government & Agency Securities Portfolio. The Fund receives compensation for lending its securities either in the form of fees or by earning interest on invested cash collateral net of borrower rebates and fees paid to a securities lending agent. Either the Fund or the borrower may terminate the loan at any time, and the borrower, after notice, is required to return borrowed securities within a standard time period. There may be risks of delay and costs in recovery of securities or even loss of rights in the collateral should the borrower of the securities fail financially. If the Fund is not able to recover securities lent, the Fund may sell the collateral and purchase a replacement investment in the market, incurring the risk that the value of the replacement security is greater than the value of the collateral. The Fund is also subject to all investment risks associated with the reinvestment of any cash collateral received, including, but not limited to, interest rate, credit and liquidity risk associated with such investments.

As of June 30, 2023, the Fund had securities on loan, which were classified as common stocks in the Investment Portfolio. The value of the related collateral exceeded the value of the securities loaned at period end. As of period end, the remaining contractual maturity of the collateral agreements was overnight and continuous.

Taxes. The Fund is treated as a separate taxpayer as provided for in the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"). It is the Fund's policy to comply with the requirements of the Code, which are applicable to regulated investment companies, and to distribute all of its taxable income to the separate accounts of the Participating Insurance Companies which hold its shares.

At June 30, 2023, the aggregate cost of investments for federal income tax purposes was \$70,311,670. The net unrealized appreciation for all investments based on tax cost was \$11,436,208. This consisted of aggregate gross unrealized appreciation for all investments for which there was an excess of value over tax cost of \$18,397,903 and aggregate gross unrealized depreciation for all investments for which there was an excess of tax cost over value of \$6,961,695.

The Fund has reviewed the tax positions for the open tax years as of December 31, 2022 and has determined that no provision for income tax and/or uncertain tax positions is required in the Fund's financial statements. The Fund's federal tax returns for the prior three fiscal years remain open subject to examination by the Internal Revenue Service.

Distribution of Income and Gains. Distributions from net investment income of the Fund, if any, are declared and distributed to shareholders annually. Net realized gains from investment transactions, in excess of available capital loss carryforwards, would be taxable to the Fund if not distributed, and, therefore, will be distributed to shareholders at least annually. The Fund may also make additional distributions for tax purposes if necessary.

The timing and characterization of certain income and capital gain distributions are determined annually in accordance with federal tax regulations which may differ from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. These differences primarily relate to certain securities sold at a loss and the realized tax character on distributions from certain securities. As a result, net investment income (loss) and net realized gain (loss) on investment transactions for a reporting period may differ significantly from distributions during such period. Accordingly, the Fund may periodically make reclassifications among certain of its capital accounts without impacting the net asset value of the Fund.

The tax character of current year distributions will be determined at the end of the current fiscal year.

Expenses. Expenses of the Trust arising in connection with a specific fund are allocated to that fund. Other Trust expenses which cannot be directly attributed to a fund are apportioned among the funds in the Trust based upon the relative net assets or other appropriate measures.

Contingencies. In the normal course of business, the Fund may enter into contracts with service providers that contain general indemnification clauses. The Fund's maximum exposure under these arrangements is unknown, as this would involve future claims that may be made against the Fund that have not yet been made. However, based on experience, the Fund expects the risk of loss to be remote.

Real Estate Investment Trusts. The Fund at its fiscal year end recharacterizes distributions received from a Real Estate Investment Trust ("REIT") investment based on information provided by the REIT into the following categories: ordinary income, long-term and short-term capital gains, and return of capital. If information is not available timely from a REIT, the recharacterization will be estimated for financial reporting purposes and a recharacterization will be made to the accounting records in the following year when such information becomes available. Distributions received from REITs in excess of income are recorded as either a reduction of cost of investments or realized gains.

Other. Investment transactions are accounted for on a trade date plus one basis for daily net asset value calculations. However, for financial reporting purposes, investment transactions are reported on trade date. Interest income is recorded on the accrual basis. Dividend income is recorded on the ex-dividend date net of foreign withholding taxes. Realized gains and losses from investment transactions are recorded on an identified cost basis. Proceeds from litigation payments, if any, are included in net realized gain (loss) from investments.

B. Purchases and Sales of Securities

During the six months ended June 30, 2023, purchases and sales of investment securities (excluding short-term investments) aggregated \$10,554,134 and \$14,814,108, respectively.

C. Related Parties

Management Agreement. Under the Investment Management Agreement with DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. ("DIMA" or the "Advisor"), an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of DWS Group GmbH & Co. KGaA ("DWS Group"), the Advisor directs the investments of the Fund in accordance with its investment objectives, policies and restrictions. The Advisor determines the securities, instruments and other contracts relating to investments to be purchased, sold or entered into by the Fund.

Pursuant to the Investment Management Agreement with the Advisor, the Fund pays a monthly management fee based on the Fund's average daily net assets, computed and accrued daily and payable monthly, at the following annual rates:

First \$250 million of the Fund's average daily net assets	.650%
Next \$750 million of such net assets	.620%
Next \$1.5 billion of such net assets	.600%
Next \$2.5 billion of such net assets	.580%
Next \$2.5 billion of such net assets	.550%
Next \$2.5 billion of such net assets	.540%
Next \$2.5 billion of such net assets	.530%
Over \$12.5 billion of such net assets	.520%

Accordingly, for the six months ended June 30, 2023, the fee pursuant to the Investment Management Agreement was equivalent to an annualized rate (exclusive of any applicable waivers/reimbursements) of 0.65% of the Fund's average daily net assets.

For the period from January 1, 2023 through April 30, 2024, the Advisor has contractually agreed to waive its fees and/or reimburse certain operating expenses of the Fund to the extent necessary to maintain the total annual operating expenses (excluding certain expenses such as extraordinary expenses, taxes, brokerage, interest expense and acquired fund fees and expenses) of each class as follows:

Class A	.81%
Class B	1.18%

For the six months ended June 30, 2023, fees waived and/or expenses reimbursed for each class are as follows:

Class A	\$ 21,478
Class B	5,163
	\$ 26,641

Administration Fee. Pursuant to an Administrative Services Agreement, DIMA provides most administrative services to the Fund. For all services provided under the Administrative Services Agreement, the Fund pays the Advisor an annual fee (“Administration Fee”) of 0.097% of the Fund’s average daily net assets, computed and accrued daily and payable monthly. For the six months ended June 30, 2023, the Administration Fee was \$38,611, of which \$6,225 is unpaid.

Service Provider Fees. DWS Service Company (“DSC”), an affiliate of the Advisor, is the transfer agent, dividend-paying agent and shareholder service agent for the Fund. Pursuant to a sub-transfer agency agreement between DSC and SS&C GIDS, Inc. (“SS&C”) (name changed from DST Systems, Inc. effective January 1, 2023), DSC has delegated certain transfer agent, dividend-paying agent and shareholder service agent functions to SS&C. DSC compensates SS&C out of the shareholder servicing fee it receives from the Fund. For the six months ended June 30, 2023, the amounts charged to the Fund by DSC were as follows:

Services to Shareholders	Total Aggregated	Unpaid at June 30, 2023
Class A	\$ 446	\$ 146
Class B	352	120
	\$ 798	\$ 266

Distribution Service Agreement. Under the Fund’s Class B 12b-1 plan, DWS Distributors, Inc. (“DDI”) received a fee (“Distribution Service Fee”) of up to 0.25% of average daily net assets of Class B shares. For the six months ended June 30, 2023, the Distribution Service Fee aggregated \$19,614, of which \$3,179 is unpaid.

Other Service Fees. Under an agreement with the Fund, DIMA is compensated for providing regulatory filing services to the Fund. For the six months ended June 30, 2023, the amount charged to the Fund by DIMA included in the Statement of Operations under “Reports to shareholders” aggregated \$653, of which \$15 is unpaid.

Trustees’ Fees and Expenses. The Fund paid retainer fees to each Trustee not affiliated with the Advisor, plus specified amounts to the Board Chairperson and to each committee Chairperson.

Affiliated Cash Management Vehicles. The Fund may invest uninvested cash balances in DWS Central Cash Management Government Fund and DWS ESG Liquidity Fund, affiliated money market funds which are managed by the Advisor. Each affiliated money market fund is managed in accordance with Rule 2a-7 under the 1940 Act, which governs the quality, maturity, diversity and liquidity of instruments in which a money market fund may invest. DWS Central Cash Management Government Fund seeks to maintain a stable net asset value, and DWS ESG Liquidity Fund maintains a floating net asset value. The Fund indirectly bears its proportionate share of the expenses of each affiliated money market fund in which it invests. DWS Central Cash Management Government Fund does not pay the Advisor an investment management fee. To the extent that DWS ESG Liquidity Fund pays an investment management fee to the Advisor, the Advisor will waive an amount of the investment management fee payable to the Advisor by the Fund equal to the amount of the investment management fee payable on the Fund’s assets invested in DWS ESG Liquidity Fund.

D. Ownership of the Fund

At June 30, 2023, two participating insurance companies were owners of record of 10% or more of the total outstanding Class A shares of the Fund, each owning 66% and 10%, respectively. Four participating insurance companies were owners of record of 10% or more of the total outstanding Class B shares of the Fund, each owning 25%, 19%, 17% and 16%, respectively.

E. Line of Credit

The Fund and other affiliated funds (the “Participants”) share in a \$375 million revolving credit facility provided by a syndication of banks. The Fund may borrow for temporary or emergency purposes, including

the meeting of redemption requests that otherwise might require the untimely disposition of securities. The Participants are charged an annual commitment fee, which is allocated based on net assets, among each of the Participants. Interest is calculated at a daily fluctuating rate per annum equal to the sum of 0.10% plus the higher of the Federal Funds Effective Rate and the Overnight Bank Funding Rate, plus 1.25%. The Fund may borrow up to a maximum of 33 percent of its net assets under the agreement. The Fund had no outstanding loans at June 30, 2023.

Other Information

(Unaudited)

Regulatory Update — Tailored Shareholder Report

Effective January 24, 2023, the SEC amended the rules for mutual fund and exchange-traded fund (“ETF”) annual and semi-annual shareholder reports. The amended rules apply to mutual funds and ETFs that are registered on Form N-1A (i.e., open-end funds) and implement a new streamlined disclosure framework requiring “concise and visually engaging” shareholder reports highlighting key information, including a simplified expense presentation, performance information, portfolio holdings and certain fund statistics. The amended rules seek to simplify shareholder reporting by consolidating investor friendly data in one report and moving other data to Form N-CSR, creating a layered disclosure framework. Certain information from the Fund’s current shareholder reports, including the Fund’s investment portfolio, financial statements and financial highlights, will move to Form N-CSR. This information must be available online, delivered free of charge upon request and filed on a semiannual basis on Form N-CSR. Notably, the amended rules will require mutual funds and ETFs to prepare separate individual shareholder reports for each fund share class. The amendments also include a revised definition of “appropriate broad-based securities market index” that will affect performance presentations in the new streamlined reports and mutual fund and ETF prospectuses. The amended rules and related form amendments have a compliance date of July 24, 2024. At this time, management is evaluating the impact of the amended rules and form amendments on the content of the Fund’s current shareholder reports.

Information About Your Fund's Expenses

(Unaudited)

As an investor of the Fund, you incur two types of costs: ongoing expenses and transaction costs. Ongoing expenses include management fees, distribution and service (12b-1) fees and other Fund expenses. Examples of transaction costs include contract charges, which are not shown in this section. The following tables are intended to help you understand your ongoing expenses (in dollars) of investing in the Fund and to help you compare these expenses with the ongoing expenses of investing in other mutual funds. In the most recent six-month period, the Fund limited these expenses; had it not done so, expenses would have been higher. The example in the table is based on an investment of \$1,000 invested at the beginning of the six-month period and held for the entire period (January 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023).

The tables illustrate your Fund's expenses in two ways:

- **Actual Fund Return.** This helps you estimate the actual dollar amount of ongoing expenses (but not transaction costs) paid on a \$1,000 investment in the Fund using the Fund's actual return during the period. To estimate the expenses you paid over the period, simply divide your account value by \$1,000 (for example, an \$8,600 account value divided by \$1,000 = 8.6), then multiply the result by the number in the "Expenses Paid per \$1,000" line under the share class you hold.
- **Hypothetical 5% Fund Return.** This helps you to compare your Fund's ongoing expenses (but not transaction costs) with those of other mutual funds using the Fund's actual expense ratio and a hypothetical rate of return of 5% per year before expenses. Examples using a 5% hypothetical fund return may be found in the shareholder reports of other mutual funds. The hypothetical account values and expenses may not be used to estimate the actual ending account balance or expenses you paid for the period.

Please note that the expenses shown in these tables are meant to highlight your ongoing expenses only and do not reflect any transaction costs. The "Expenses Paid per \$1,000" line of the tables is useful in comparing ongoing expenses only and will not help you determine the relative total expense of owning different funds. If these transaction costs had been included, your costs would have been higher.

Expenses and Value of a \$1,000 Investment for the six months ended June 30, 2023

Actual Fund Return	Class A	Class B
Beginning Account Value 1/1/23	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Ending Account Value 6/30/23	\$ 1,064.90	\$ 1,063.20
Expenses Paid per \$1,000*	\$ 4.15	\$ 6.04

Hypothetical 5% Fund Return	Class A	Class B
Beginning Account Value 1/1/23	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Ending Account Value 6/30/23	\$ 1,020.78	\$ 1,018.94
Expenses Paid per \$1,000*	\$ 4.06	\$ 5.91

* Expenses are equal to the Fund's annualized expense ratio for each share class, multiplied by the average account value over the period, multiplied by 181 (the number of days in the most recent six-month period), then divided by 365.

Annualized Expense Ratios	Class A	Class B
Deutsche DWS Variable Series II — DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP	.81%	1.18%

For more information, please refer to the Fund's prospectus.

These tables do not reflect charges and fees ("contract charges") associated with the separate account that invests in the Fund or any variable life insurance policy or variable annuity contract for which the Fund is an investment option.

For an analysis of the fees associated with an investment in the Fund or similar funds, please refer to the current and hypothetical expense calculators for Variable Insurance Products which can be found at dws.com/calculators.

Liquidity Risk Management

In accordance with Rule 22e-4 (the “Liquidity Rule”) under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (the “1940 Act”), your Fund has adopted a liquidity risk management program (the “Program”), and the Board has designated DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. (“DIMA”) as Program administrator. The Program is designed to assess and manage your Fund’s liquidity risk (the risk that the Fund would be unable to meet requests to redeem shares of the Fund without significant dilution of remaining investors’ interests in the Fund). DIMA has designated a committee (the “Committee”) composed of personnel from multiple departments within DIMA and its affiliates that is responsible for the implementation and ongoing administration of the Program, which includes assessing the Fund’s liquidity risk under both normal and reasonably foreseeable stressed conditions. Under the Program, every investment held by the Fund is classified on a daily basis into one of four liquidity categories based on estimations of the investment’s ability to be sold during designated timeframes in current market conditions without significantly changing the investment’s market value.

In February 2023, as required by the Program and the Liquidity Rule, DIMA provided the Board with an annual written report (the “Report”) addressing the operation of the Program and assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of its implementation during the period from December 1, 2021 through November 30, 2022 (the “Reporting Period”). During the Reporting Period, your Fund was predominately invested in highly liquid investments (investments that the Fund anticipates can be converted to cash within three business days or less in current market conditions without significantly changing their market value). As a result, your Fund is not required to adopt, and has not adopted, a “Highly Liquid Investment Minimum” as defined in the Liquidity Rule. During the Reporting Period, the Fund did not approach the 15% limit imposed by the Liquidity Rule on holdings in illiquid investments (investments that cannot be sold or disposed of in seven days or less in current market conditions without the sale of the investment significantly changing the market value of the investment). Your Fund did not experience any issues meeting investor redemptions at any time during the Reporting Period. In the Report, DIMA stated that it believes the Program has operated adequately and effectively to manage the Fund’s liquidity risk during the Reporting Period. DIMA also reported that there were no material changes made to the Program during the Reporting Period.

Proxy Voting

The Trust’s policies and procedures for voting proxies for portfolio securities and information about how the Trust voted proxies related to its portfolio securities during the most recent 12-month period ended June 30 are available on our Web site — dws.com/en-us/resources/proxy-voting — or on the SEC’s Web site — sec.gov. To obtain a written copy of the Trust’s policies and procedures without charge, upon request, call us toll free at (800) 728-3337.

Advisory Agreement Board Considerations and Fee Evaluation

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter referred to as the “Board” or “Trustees”) approved the renewal of DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP’s (the “Fund”) investment management agreement (the “Agreement”) with DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. (“DIMA”) in September 2022.

In terms of the process that the Board followed prior to approving the Agreement, shareholders should know that:

- During the entire process, all of the Fund’s Trustees were independent of DIMA and its affiliates (the “Independent Trustees”).
- The Board met frequently during the past year to discuss fund matters and dedicated a substantial amount of time to contract review matters. Over the course of several months, the Board reviewed extensive materials received from DIMA, independent third parties and independent counsel. These materials included an analysis of the Fund’s performance, fees and expenses, and profitability from a fee consultant retained by the Fund’s Independent Trustees (the “Fee Consultant”).
- The Board also received extensive information throughout the year regarding performance of the Fund.
- The Independent Trustees regularly met privately with counsel to discuss contract review and other matters. In addition, the Independent Trustees were advised by the Fee Consultant in the course of their review of the Fund’s contractual arrangements and considered a comprehensive report prepared by the Fee Consultant in connection with their deliberations.
- In connection with reviewing the Agreement, the Board also reviewed the terms of the Fund’s Rule 12b-1 plan, distribution agreement, administrative services agreement, transfer agency agreement and other material service agreements.

In connection with the contract review process, the Board considered the factors discussed below, among others. The Board also considered that DIMA and its predecessors have managed the Fund since its inception, and the Board believes that a long-term relationship with a capable, conscientious advisor is in the best interests of the Fund. The Board considered, generally, that shareholders chose to invest or remain invested in the Fund knowing that DIMA managed the Fund. DIMA is part of DWS Group GmbH & Co. KGaA (“DWS Group”). DWS Group is a global asset management business that offers a wide range of investing expertise and resources, including research capabilities in many countries throughout the world. In 2018, approximately 20% of DWS Group’s shares were sold in an initial public offering, with Deutsche Bank AG owning the remaining shares.

As part of the contract review process, the Board carefully considered the fees and expenses of each DWS fund overseen by the Board in light of the fund’s performance. In many cases, this led to the negotiation and implementation of expense caps.

While shareholders may focus primarily on fund performance and fees, the Fund’s Board considers these and many other factors, including the quality and integrity of DIMA’s personnel and administrative support services provided by DIMA, such as back-office operations, fund valuations, and compliance policies and procedures.

Nature, Quality and Extent of Services. The Board considered the terms of the Agreement, including the scope of advisory services provided under the Agreement. The Board noted that, under the Agreement, DIMA provides portfolio management services to the Fund and that, pursuant to a separate administrative services agreement, DIMA provides administrative services to the Fund. The Board considered the experience and skills of senior management and investment personnel and the resources made available to such personnel. The Board also considered the risks to DIMA in sponsoring or managing the Fund, including financial, operational and reputational risks, the potential economic impact to DIMA from such risks and DIMA’s approach to addressing such risks. The Board reviewed the Fund’s performance over short-term and long-term periods and compared those returns to various agreed-upon performance measures, including market index(es) and a peer universe compiled using information supplied by Morningstar Direct (“Morningstar”), an independent fund data service. The Board also noted that it has put into place a process of identifying “Funds in Review” (e.g., funds performing poorly relative to a peer universe), and receives additional reporting from DIMA regarding such funds and, where appropriate, DIMA’s plans to address underperformance. The Board believes this process is an effective manner of identifying and addressing underperforming funds. Based on the information provided, the Board noted that, for the one-, three- and five-year periods ended December 31, 2021, the Fund’s performance (Class A shares) was in the 3rd quartile, 4th quartile and 4th quartile, respectively, of the applicable Morningstar universe (the 1st quartile being the best performers and the 4th quartile being the worst performers). The Board also observed that the Fund has

outperformed its benchmark in the one-year period and has underperformed its benchmark in the three- and five-year periods ended December 31, 2021. The Board noted the disappointing investment performance of the Fund in recent periods and continued to discuss with senior management of DIMA the factors contributing to such underperformance and actions being taken to improve performance. The Board noted certain changes to the Fund's strategy to permit the expanded use of derivatives. The Board recognized the efforts by DIMA in recent years to enhance its investment platform and improve long-term performance across the DWS fund complex.

Fees and Expenses. The Board considered the Fund's investment management fee schedule, operating expenses and total expense ratios, and comparative information provided by Broadridge Financial Solutions, Inc. ("Broadridge") and the Fee Consultant regarding investment management fee rates paid to other investment advisors by similar funds (1st quartile being the most favorable and 4th quartile being the least favorable). With respect to management fees paid to other investment advisors by similar funds, the Board noted that the contractual fee rates paid by the Fund, which include a 0.097% fee paid to DIMA under the Fund's administrative services agreement, were lower than the median (2nd quartile) of the applicable Broadridge peer group (based on Broadridge data provided as of December 31, 2021). The Board noted that the Fund's Class A shares total (net) operating expenses were expected to be lower than the median (2nd quartile) of the applicable Broadridge expense universe (based on Broadridge data provided as of December 31, 2021, and analyzing Broadridge expense universe Class A (net) expenses less any applicable 12b-1 fees) ("Broadridge Universe Expenses"). The Board also reviewed data comparing each other operational share class's total (net) operating expenses to the applicable Broadridge Universe Expenses. The Board noted that the expense limitations agreed to by DIMA were expected to help the Fund's total (net) operating expenses remain competitive. The Board considered the Fund's management fee rate as compared to fees charged by DIMA to comparable DWS U.S. registered funds ("DWS Funds"), noting that DIMA indicated that it does not provide services to any other comparable DWS Funds. The information requested by the Board as part of its review of fees and expenses also included information about institutional accounts (including any sub-advised funds and accounts) and funds offered primarily to European investors ("DWS Europe Funds") managed by DWS Group. The Board noted that DIMA indicated that DWS Group does not manage any institutional accounts or DWS Europe Funds comparable to the Fund.

On the basis of the information provided, the Board concluded that management fees were reasonable and appropriate in light of the nature, quality and extent of services provided by DIMA.

Profitability. The Board reviewed detailed information regarding revenues received by DIMA under the Agreement. The Board considered the estimated costs to DIMA, and pre-tax profits realized by DIMA, from advising the DWS Funds, as well as estimates of the pre-tax profits attributable to managing the Fund in particular. The Board also received information regarding the estimated enterprise-wide profitability of DIMA and its affiliates with respect to all fund services in totality and by fund. The Board and the Fee Consultant reviewed DIMA's methodology in allocating its costs to the management of the Fund. Based on the information provided, the Board concluded that the pre-tax profits realized by DIMA in connection with the management of the Fund were not unreasonable. The Board also reviewed certain publicly available information regarding the profitability of certain similar investment management firms. The Board noted that, while information regarding the profitability of such firms is limited (and in some cases is not necessarily prepared on a comparable basis), DIMA and its affiliates' overall profitability with respect to the DWS Funds (after taking into account distribution and other services provided to the funds by DIMA and its affiliates) was lower than the overall profitability levels of most comparable firms for which such data was available.

Economies of Scale. The Board considered whether there are economies of scale with respect to the management of the Fund and whether the Fund benefits from any economies of scale. The Board noted that the Fund's investment management fee schedule includes fee breakpoints. The Board concluded that the Fund's fee schedule represents an appropriate sharing between the Fund and DIMA of such economies of scale as may exist in the management of the Fund at current asset levels.

Other Benefits to DIMA and Its Affiliates. The Board also considered the character and amount of other incidental or "fall-out" benefits received by DIMA and its affiliates, including any fees received by DIMA for administrative services provided to the Fund, any fees received by an affiliate of DIMA for transfer agency services provided to the Fund and any fees received by an affiliate of DIMA for distribution services. The Board also considered benefits to DIMA related to brokerage and soft-dollar allocations, including allocating brokerage to pay for research generated by parties other than the executing broker dealers, which pertain primarily to funds investing in equity securities. In addition, the Board considered the incidental public relations benefits to DIMA related to DWS Funds advertising and cross-selling opportunities among DIMA

products and services. The Board considered these benefits in reaching its conclusion that the Fund's management fees were reasonable.

Compliance. The Board considered the significant attention and resources dedicated by DIMA to its compliance processes in recent years. The Board noted in particular (i) the experience, seniority and time commitment of the individuals serving as DIMAs and the Fund's chief compliance officers and (ii) the substantial commitment of resources by DIMA and its affiliates to compliance matters, including the retention of compliance personnel.

Based on all of the information considered and the conclusions reached, the Board determined that the continuation of the Agreement is in the best interests of the Fund. In making this determination, the Board did not give particular weight to any single factor identified above. The Board considered these factors over the course of numerous meetings, certain of which were in executive session with only the Independent Trustees and counsel present. It is possible that individual Independent Trustees may have weighed these factors differently in reaching their individual decisions to approve the continuation of the Agreement.



VS2SMCV-3 (R-028381-12 8/23)