



# Prospectus

May 1, 2024

DEUTSCHE DWS VARIABLE SERIES II  
CLASS B

DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP

This prospectus should be read in conjunction with the variable life insurance or variable annuity contract prospectus and plan documents for tax-qualified plans. These shares are available and are being marketed exclusively as a pooled funding vehicle for life insurance companies writing all types of variable life insurance policies and variable annuity contracts.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) does not approve or disapprove these shares or determine whether the information in this prospectus is truthful or complete. It is a criminal offense for anyone to inform you otherwise.

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YOUR INVESTMENT IN THE FUND IS NOT A BANK DEPOSIT AND IS NOT INSURED OR GUARANTEED BY THE FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCY, ENTITY OR PERSON.



## DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP

### INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The fund seeks long-term capital appreciation.

### FEES AND EXPENSES

This table describes the fees and expenses you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the fund. This information does not reflect 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. These fees will increase expenses.

#### SHAREHOLDER FEES

(paid directly from your investment)	None
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#### ANNUAL FUND OPERATING EXPENSES

(expenses that you pay each year as a % of the value of your investment)

Management fee	0.65
Distribution/service (12b-1) fees	0.25
Other expenses	0.34
<b>Total annual fund operating expenses</b>	<b>1.24</b>
Fee waiver/expense reimbursement	0.07
<b>Total annual fund operating expenses after fee waiver/expense reimbursement</b>	<b>1.17</b>

The Advisor has contractually agreed through April 30, 2025 to waive its fees and/or reimburse certain operating expenses of the fund to the extent necessary to maintain the fund's total annual operating expenses (excluding certain expenses such as extraordinary expenses, taxes, brokerage and interest expenses and acquired funds fees and expenses) at a ratio no higher than 1.17% for Class B shares. The agreement may only be terminated with the consent of the fund's Board.

#### EXAMPLE

This Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The

Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and that the fund's operating expenses (including one year of capped expenses in each period) remain the same. This example does not reflect any fees or sales charges imposed by a variable contract for which the fund is an investment option. If they were included, your costs would be higher.

Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
\$119	\$387	\$674	\$1,494

#### PORTFOLIO TURNOVER

The fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover may indicate higher transaction costs. These costs are not reflected in annual fund operating expenses or in the expense example, and can affect the fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the fund's portfolio turnover rate was 28% of the average value of its portfolio.

#### PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

**Main investments.** Under normal circumstances, the fund invests at least 80% of net assets, plus the amount of any borrowings for investment purposes, in undervalued common stocks of small and mid-size US companies. The fund defines small companies as those that are similar in market capitalization to those in the Russell 2000<sup>®</sup> Value Index. While the market capitalization of the Russell 2000<sup>®</sup> Value Index changes throughout the year, as of February 29, 2024, the market capitalization range of the Russell 2000<sup>®</sup> Value Index was between \$25.988 million and \$15.237 billion. Under normal circumstances, the Russell 2000<sup>®</sup> Value Index is reconstituted annually every June. The fund defines mid-size companies as those that are similar in market capitalization to those in the Russell Midcap<sup>®</sup> Value Index. While the market capitalization range of the Russell Midcap<sup>®</sup> Value Index changes throughout

the year, as of February 29, 2024, the market capitalization range of the Russell Midcap<sup>®</sup> Value Index was between \$364 million and \$84.828 billion. Under normal circumstances, the Russell Midcap<sup>®</sup> Value Index is reconstituted annually every June. The fund intends to invest primarily in companies whose market capitalizations fall within the normal range of each index at the time of investment.

While the fund invests mainly in US stocks, it could invest up to 20% of net assets in foreign securities.

The fund's equity investments are mainly common stocks but may also include other types of equities such as preferred or convertible stocks. The fund may also invest in initial public offerings and real estate investment trusts (REITs).

**Management process.** In choosing stocks, portfolio management uses proprietary quantitative models to identify and acquire holdings for the fund. The quantitative models are research based and identify primarily fundamental factors, including valuation, momentum, profitability, earnings and sales growth, which have been effective sources of return historically. These are dynamic models with different factor weights for different industry groupings. The fund's portfolio is constructed based on this quantitative process that strives to maximize returns while maintaining a risk profile similar to the fund's benchmark index.

Portfolio management may sell a security when its quantitative model indicates that other investments are more attractive, when the company no longer meets performance or risk expectations, or to maintain portfolio characteristics similar to the fund's benchmark.

All investment decisions are made within risk parameters set by portfolio management. The factors considered and models used by portfolio management may be adjusted from time to time and may favor different types of securities from different industries and companies at different times.

Portfolio management may also consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors that it believes to be financially material. Because small cap companies tend to be relatively early on in their operating histories, external rating companies may be unable to find ESG data for such companies.

**Derivatives.** The fund may invest in derivatives, which are financial instruments whose performance is derived, at least in part, from the performance of an underlying asset, security or index. In particular, portfolio management may use put options for hedging and volatility management purposes.

The fund may also use other types of derivatives (i) for hedging purposes; (ii) for risk management; (iii) for non-hedging purposes to seek to enhance potential gains; or (iv) as a substitute for direct investment in a particular asset class or to keep cash on hand to meet shareholder redemptions.

**Securities lending.** The fund may lend securities (up to one-third of total assets) to approved institutions, such as registered broker-dealers, pooled investment vehicles, banks and other financial institutions. In connection with such loans, the fund receives liquid collateral in an amount that is based on the type and value of the securities being lent, with riskier securities generally requiring higher levels of collateral.

## MAIN RISKS

There are several risk factors that could hurt the fund's performance, cause you to lose money or cause the fund's performance to trail that of other investments. The fund may not achieve its investment objective, and is not intended to be a complete investment program. An investment in the fund is not a deposit of a bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other governmental agency.

**Stock market risk.** When stock prices fall, you should expect the value of your investment to fall as well. Stock prices can be hurt by poor management on the part of the stock's issuer, shrinking product demand and other business risks. These may affect single companies as well as groups of companies. The market as a whole may not favor the types of investments the fund makes, which could adversely affect a stock's price, regardless of how well the company performs, or the fund's ability to sell a stock at an attractive price. There is a chance that stock prices overall will decline because stock markets tend to move in cycles, with periods of rising and falling prices. Events in the US and global financial markets, including actions taken by the US Federal Reserve or foreign central banks to stimulate or stabilize economic growth, may at times result in unusually high market volatility which could negatively affect performance. High market volatility may also result from significant shifts in momentum of one or more specific stocks due to unusual increases or decreases in trading activity. Momentum can change quickly, and securities subject to shifts in momentum may be more volatile than the market as a whole and returns on such securities may drop precipitously. To the extent that the fund invests in a particular geographic region, capitalization or sector, the fund's performance may be affected by the general performance of that region, capitalization or sector.

**Market disruption risk.** Economies and financial markets throughout the world have become increasingly interconnected, which has increased the likelihood that events or conditions in one country or region will adversely impact markets or issuers in other countries or regions. This includes reliance on global supply chains that are susceptible to disruptions resulting from, among other things, war and other armed conflicts, extreme weather events, and natural disasters. Such supply chain disruptions can lead to, and have led to, economic and market disruptions that have far-reaching effects on financial markets worldwide. The value of the fund's investments may be negatively

affected by adverse changes in overall economic or market conditions, such as the level of economic activity and productivity, unemployment and labor force participation rates, inflation or deflation (and expectations for inflation or deflation), interest rates, demand and supply for particular products or resources including labor, and debt levels and credit ratings, among other factors. Such adverse conditions may contribute to an overall economic contraction across entire economies or markets, which may negatively impact the profitability of issuers operating in those economies or markets. In addition, geopolitical and other globally interconnected occurrences, including war, terrorism, economic uncertainty or financial crises, contagion, trade disputes, government debt crises (including defaults or downgrades) or uncertainty about government debt payments, government shutdowns, public health crises, natural disasters, supply chain disruptions, climate change and related events or conditions, have led, and in the future may lead, to disruptions in the US and world economies and markets, which may increase financial market volatility and have significant adverse direct or indirect effects on the fund and its investments. Adverse market conditions or disruptions could cause the fund to lose money, experience significant redemptions, and encounter operational difficulties. Although multiple asset classes may be affected by adverse market conditions or a particular market disruption, the duration and effects may not be the same for all types of assets.

Current military and other armed conflicts in various geographic regions, including those in Europe and the Middle East, can lead to, and have led to, economic and market disruptions, which may not be limited to the geographic region in which the conflict is occurring. Such conflicts can also result, and have resulted in some cases, in sanctions being levied by the United States, the European Union and/or other countries against countries or other actors involved in the conflict. In addition, such conflicts and related sanctions can adversely affect regional and global energy, commodities, financial and other markets and thus could affect the value of the fund's investments. The extent and duration of any military conflict, related sanctions and resulting economic and market disruptions are impossible to predict, but could be substantial.

Other market disruption events include pandemic spread of viruses, such as the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19, which have caused significant uncertainty, market volatility, decreased economic and other activity, increased government activity, including economic stimulus measures, and supply chain disruptions. While COVID-19 is no longer considered to be a public health emergency, the fund and its investments may be adversely affected by lingering effects of this virus or future pandemic spread of viruses.

In addition, markets are becoming increasingly susceptible to disruption events resulting from the use of new and emerging technologies to engage in cyber-attacks or to take over the websites and/or social media accounts of companies, governmental entities or public officials, or to otherwise pose as or impersonate such, which then may be used to disseminate false or misleading information that can cause volatility in financial markets or for the stock of a particular company, group of companies, industry or other class of assets.

Adverse market conditions or particular market disruptions, such as those discussed above, may magnify the impact of each of the other risks described in this "MAIN RISKS" section and may increase volatility in one or more markets in which the fund invests leading to the potential for greater losses for the fund.

**Small company risk.** Small company stocks tend to be more volatile than medium-sized or large company stocks. Because stock analysts are less likely to follow small companies, less information about them is available to investors. Industry-wide reversals may have a greater impact on small companies, since they may lack the financial resources of larger companies. Small company stocks are typically less liquid than large company stocks.

**Medium-sized company risk.** Medium-sized company stocks tend to be more volatile than large company stocks. Because stock analysts are less likely to follow medium-sized companies, less information about them is available to investors. Industry-wide reversals may have a greater impact on medium-sized companies, since they may lack the financial resources of larger companies. Medium-sized company stocks are typically less liquid than large company stocks.

**Value investing risk.** As a category, value stocks may underperform growth stocks (and the stock market as a whole) over any period of time and may shift in and out of favor with investors generally, sometimes rapidly, depending on changes in market, economic and other factors. In addition, value stocks selected for investment by portfolio management may not perform as anticipated.

**Quantitative model risk.** The fund's strategy relies heavily on quantitative models and the analysis of specific metrics to construct the fund's portfolio. The impact of these 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. In addition, relying on quantitative models entails the risk that the models themselves may be limited or incorrect, that the data on which the models rely may be incorrect or incomplete, and that the Advisor may not be successful in selecting companies for investment or determining the weighting of particular stocks in the fund's portfolio. Any of these factors could cause the fund to underperform funds with similar strategies that do not select stocks based on quantitative analysis.



**Security selection risk.** The securities in the fund's portfolio may decline in value. Portfolio management could be wrong in its analysis of industries, companies, economic trends, ESG factors, the relative attractiveness of different securities or other matters.

**Focus risk.** To the extent that the fund focuses its investments in particular industries, asset classes or sectors of the economy, any market price movements, regulatory or technological changes, or economic conditions affecting companies in those industries, asset classes or sectors may have a significant impact on the fund's performance. The fund may become more focused in particular industries, asset classes or sectors of the economy as a result of changes in the valuation of the fund's investments or fluctuations in the fund's assets, and the fund is not required to reduce such exposures under these circumstances.

**Foreign investment risk.** The fund faces the risks inherent in foreign investing. Adverse political, economic or social developments, as well as US and foreign government actions such as the imposition of tariffs, economic and trade sanctions or embargoes, could undermine the value of the fund's foreign investments, prevent the fund from realizing the full value of its foreign investments or prevent the fund from selling foreign securities it holds.

Financial reporting standards for companies based in foreign markets differ from those in the US. Additionally, foreign securities markets generally are smaller and less liquid than US markets. To the extent that the fund invests in non-US dollar denominated foreign securities, changes in currency exchange rates may affect the US dollar value of foreign securities or the income or gain received on these securities. In addition, because non-US markets may be open on days when the fund does not price its shares, the value of the foreign securities in the fund's portfolio may change on days when shareholders will not be able to purchase or sell the fund's shares.

**Real estate securities risk.** The value of real estate securities in general, and REITs in particular, are subject to the same risks as direct investments in real estate and will depend on the value of the underlying properties or the underlying loans or interest. The value of these securities will rise and fall in response to many factors, including economic conditions, the demand for rental property and changes in interest rates. In particular, the value of these securities may decline when interest rates rise and will also be affected by the real estate market and by the management of the underlying properties. During periods of rising interest rates, real estate securities may lose appeal for investors who may be able to obtain higher yields from other income-producing investments. Rising interest rates may also mean that financing for property purchases and improvements is more costly and difficult to obtain. Further, real estate companies may be negatively impacted by liabilities or losses due to environmental problems, extreme weather or natural disasters. In addition,

real estate values have been subject to substantial fluctuations and declines on a local, regional and national basis in the past and may continue to be in the future. Highly leveraged real estate companies are particularly vulnerable to the effects of rising interest rates and/or an economic downturn. REITs may be more volatile and/or more illiquid than other types of equity securities.

**Pricing risk.** If market conditions make it difficult to value some investments, the fund may value these investments using more subjective methods, such as fair value pricing. In such cases, the value determined for an investment could be different from the value realized upon such investment's sale. As a result, you could pay more than the market value when buying fund shares or receive less than the market value when selling fund shares.

**Securities lending risk.** Securities lending involves the risk that the fund may lose money because the borrower of the loaned securities fails to return the securities in a timely manner or at all. A delay in the recovery of loaned securities could interfere with the fund's ability to vote proxies or settle transactions. Delayed settlement may limit the ability of the fund to reinvest the proceeds of a sale of securities or prevent the fund from selling securities at times and prices it considers desirable. The fund could also lose money in the event of a decline in the value of the collateral provided for the loaned securities, or a decline in the value of any investments made with cash collateral or even a loss of rights in the collateral should the borrower of the securities fail financially while holding the securities.

**Derivatives risk.** Derivatives involve risks different from, and possibly greater than, the risks associated with investing directly in securities and other more traditional investments. Risks associated with derivatives may include the risk that the derivative is not well correlated with the underlying asset, security or index to which it relates; the risk that derivatives may result in losses or missed opportunities; the risk that the fund will be unable to sell the derivative because of an illiquid secondary market; the risk that a counterparty is unwilling or unable to meet its obligation, which risk may be heightened in derivative transactions entered into "over-the-counter" (i.e., not on an exchange or contract market); and the risk that the derivative transaction could expose the fund to the effects of leverage, which could increase the fund's exposure to the market and magnify potential losses.

**Counterparty risk.** A financial institution or other counterparty with whom the fund does business, or that underwrites, distributes or guarantees any investments or contracts that the fund owns or is otherwise exposed to, may decline in financial health and become unable to honor its commitments. This could cause losses for the fund or could delay the return or delivery of collateral or other assets to the fund.

**Liquidity risk.** In certain situations, it may be difficult or impossible to sell an investment and/or the fund may sell certain investments at a price or time that is not advantageous in order to meet redemption requests or other cash needs. Unusual market conditions, such as an unusually high volume of redemptions or other similar conditions could increase liquidity risk for the fund.

**IPO risk.** Prices of securities bought in an initial public offering (IPO) may rise and fall rapidly, often because of investor perceptions rather than economic reasons. To the extent a mutual fund is small in size, its IPO investments may have a significant impact on its performance since they may represent a larger proportion of the fund's overall portfolio as compared to the portfolio of a larger fund.

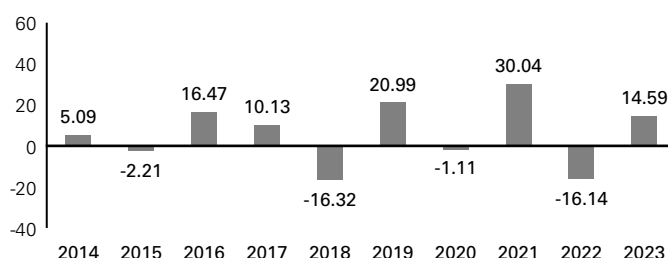
**Operational and technology risk.** Cyber-attacks, disruptions or failures that affect the fund's service providers or counterparties, issuers of securities held by the fund, or other market participants may adversely affect the fund and its shareholders, including by causing losses for the fund or impairing fund operations. For example, the fund's or its service providers' assets or sensitive or confidential information may be misappropriated, data may be corrupted and operations may be disrupted (e.g., cyber-attacks, operational failures or broader disruptions may cause the release of private shareholder information or confidential fund information, interfere with the processing of shareholder transactions, impact the ability to calculate the fund's net asset value and impede trading). Market events and disruptions also may trigger a volume of transactions that overloads current information technology and communication systems and processes, impacting the ability to conduct the fund's operations.

While the fund and its service providers may establish business continuity and other plans and processes that seek to address the possibility of and fallout from cyber-attacks, disruptions or failures, there are inherent limitations in such plans and systems, including that they do not apply to third parties, such as fund counterparties, issuers of securities held by the fund or other market participants, as well as the possibility that certain risks have not been identified or that unknown threats may emerge in the future and there is no assurance that such plans and processes will be effective. Among other situations, disruptions (for example, pandemics or health crises) that cause prolonged periods of remote work or significant employee absences at the fund's service providers could impact the ability to conduct the fund's operations. In addition, the fund cannot directly control any cybersecurity plans and systems put in place by its service providers, fund counterparties, issuers of securities held by the fund or other market participants.

## PAST PERFORMANCE

How a fund's returns vary from year to year can give an idea of its risk; so can comparing fund performance to overall market performance (as measured by an appropriate market index). Past performance may not indicate future results. All performance figures below assume that dividends and distributions were reinvested. For more recent performance figures, go to [dws.com](https://dws.com) (the Web site does not form a part of this prospectus) or call the telephone number included in this prospectus. This information does not reflect 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. These fees will reduce returns.

### CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURNS (%) (Class B)



	Returns	Period ending
<b>Best Quarter</b>	25.55%	December 31, 2020
<b>Worst Quarter</b>	-34.24%	March 31, 2020
<b>Year-to-Date</b>	6.57%	March 31, 2024

### AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURNS

(For periods ended 12/31/2023 expressed as a %)

	Class Inception	1 Year	5 Years	10 Years
<b>Class B before Tax</b>	7/1/2002	14.59	8.38	5.13
<b>Russell 2500™ Value Index</b> (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses or taxes)		15.98	10.79	7.42

## MANAGEMENT

### Investment Advisor

DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc.

### Portfolio Manager(s)

**Pankaj Bhatnagar, PhD, Head of Investment Strategy Equity.** Portfolio Manager of the fund. Began managing the fund in 2019.

**Arno V. Puskar, Senior Portfolio Manager Equity.** Portfolio Manager of the fund through May 15, 2024. Began managing the fund in 2019.

**Hiten Shah, Portfolio Manager Equity.** Portfolio Manager of the fund beginning May 15, 2024.

## **PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES**

**The fund is intended for use in a variable insurance product.** You should contact the sponsoring insurance company for information on how to purchase and sell shares of the fund.

## **TAX INFORMATION**

The fund normally distributes its net investment income and realized capital gains, if any, to its shareholders, the separate accounts of participating insurance companies. These distributions may not be taxable to the holders of variable annuity contracts and variable life insurance policies. For information concerning the federal income tax consequences for the holders of such contracts or policies, holders should consult the prospectus used in connection with the issuance of their particular contracts or policies.

## **PAYMENTS TO FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES**

If you purchase shares of the fund through selected affiliated and unaffiliated brokers, dealers, participating insurance companies or other financial intermediaries, the fund, the Advisor, and/or the Advisor's affiliates, may pay the financial intermediary for the sale of fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the financial intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your insurance company's Web site for more information.



## Fund Details

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT FUND STRATEGIES AND RISKS

#### DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP

#### INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

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#### PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

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**Market disruption risk.** Economies and financial markets throughout the world have become increasingly interconnected, which has increased the likelihood that events or conditions in one country or region will adversely impact markets or issuers in other countries or regions. This includes reliance on global supply chains that are susceptible to disruptions resulting from, among other things, war and other armed conflicts, extreme weather events, and natural disasters. Such supply chain disruptions can lead to, and have led to, economic and market disruptions that have far-reaching effects on financial markets worldwide. The value of the fund's investments may be negatively affected by adverse changes in overall economic or market conditions, such as the level of economic activity and productivity, unemployment and labor force participation rates, inflation or deflation (and expectations for inflation or deflation), interest rates, demand and supply for particular

products or resources including labor, and debt levels and credit ratings, among other factors. Such adverse conditions may contribute to an overall economic contraction across entire economies or markets, which may negatively impact the profitability of issuers operating in those economies or markets. In addition, geopolitical and other globally interconnected occurrences, including war, terrorism, economic uncertainty or financial crises, contagion, trade disputes, government debt crises (including defaults or downgrades) or uncertainty about government debt payments, government shutdowns, public health crises, natural disasters, supply chain disruptions, climate change and related events or conditions, have led, and in the future may lead, to disruptions in the US and world economies and markets, which may increase financial market volatility and have significant adverse direct or indirect effects on the fund and its investments. Adverse market conditions or disruptions could cause the fund to lose money, experience significant redemptions, and encounter operational difficulties. Although multiple asset classes may be affected by adverse market conditions or a particular market disruption, the duration and effects may not be the same for all types of assets.

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In addition, markets are becoming increasingly susceptible to disruption events resulting from the use of new and emerging technologies to engage in cyber-attacks or to take over the websites and/or social media accounts of companies, governmental entities or public officials, or to otherwise pose as or impersonate such, which then may be used to disseminate false or misleading information

that can cause volatility in financial markets or for the stock of a particular company, group of companies, industry or other class of assets.

Adverse market conditions or particular market disruptions, such as those discussed above, may magnify the impact of each of the other risks described in this “MAIN RISKS” section and may increase volatility in one or more markets in which the fund invests leading to the potential for greater losses for the fund.

**Small company risk.** Small company stocks tend to be more volatile than medium-sized or large company stocks. Because stock analysts are less likely to follow small companies, less information about them is available to investors. Industry-wide reversals may have a greater impact on small companies, since they may lack the financial resources of larger companies. Small company stocks are typically less liquid than large company stocks.

**Medium-sized company risk.** Medium-sized company stocks tend to be more volatile than large company stocks. Because stock analysts are less likely to follow medium-sized companies, less information about them is available to investors. Industry-wide reversals may have a greater impact on medium-sized companies, since they may lack the financial resources of larger companies. Medium-sized company stocks are typically less liquid than large company stocks.

**Value investing risk.** As a category, value stocks may underperform growth stocks (and the stock market as a whole) over any period of time and may shift in and out of favor with investors generally, sometimes rapidly, depending on changes in market, economic and other factors. In addition, value stocks selected for investment by portfolio management may not perform as anticipated.

**Quantitative model risk.** The fund’s strategy relies heavily on quantitative models and the analysis of specific metrics to construct the fund’s portfolio. The impact of these 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. In addition, relying on quantitative models entails the risk that the models themselves may be limited or incorrect, that the data on which the models rely may be incorrect or incomplete, and that the Advisor may not be successful in selecting companies for investment or determining the weighting of particular stocks in the fund’s portfolio. Any of these factors could cause the fund to underperform funds with similar strategies that do not select stocks based on quantitative analysis.

**Security selection risk.** The securities in the fund’s portfolio may decline in value. Portfolio management could be wrong in its analysis of industries, companies, economic trends, ESG factors, the relative attractiveness of different securities or other matters.

**Focus risk.** To the extent that the fund focuses its investments in particular industries, asset classes or sectors of the economy, any market price movements, regulatory or technological changes, or economic conditions affecting companies in those industries, asset classes or sectors may have a significant impact on the fund’s performance. The fund may become more focused in particular industries, asset classes or sectors of the economy as a result of changes in the valuation of the fund’s investments or fluctuations in the fund’s assets, and the fund is not required to reduce such exposures under these circumstances.

**Foreign investment risk.** The fund faces the risks inherent in foreign investing. Adverse political, economic or social developments, as well as US and foreign government actions such as the imposition of tariffs, economic and trade sanctions or embargoes, could undermine the value of the fund’s foreign investments, prevent the fund from realizing the full value of its foreign investments or prevent the fund from selling foreign securities it holds.

Financial reporting standards for companies based in foreign markets differ from those in the US. Additionally, foreign securities markets generally are smaller and less liquid than US markets. To the extent that the fund invests in non-US dollar denominated foreign securities, changes in currency exchange rates may affect the US dollar value of foreign securities or the income or gain received on these securities. In addition, because non-US markets may be open on days when the fund does not price its shares, the value of the foreign securities in the fund’s portfolio may change on days when shareholders will not be able to purchase or sell the fund’s shares.

Foreign governments may restrict investment by foreigners, limit withdrawal of trading profit or currency from the country, restrict currency exchange or seize foreign investments. The foreign investments of the fund may also be subject to foreign withholding or other taxes. Foreign brokerage commissions and other fees are generally higher than those for US investments, and the transactions and custody of foreign assets may involve delays in payment, delivery or recovery of money or investments.

Foreign markets can have liquidity risks beyond those typical of US markets. Because foreign exchanges generally are smaller and less liquid than US exchanges, buying and selling foreign investments can be more difficult and costly. Relatively small transactions can sometimes materially affect the price and availability of foreign securities. In certain situations, it may become virtually impossible to sell a foreign investment in an orderly fashion at a price that approaches portfolio management’s estimate of its value. For the same reason, it may at times be difficult to value the fund’s foreign investments.

**Real estate securities risk.** The value of real estate securities in general, and REITs in particular, are subject to the same risks as direct investments in real estate and will



depend on the value of the underlying properties or the underlying loans or interest. The value of these securities will rise and fall in response to many factors, including economic conditions, the demand for rental property and changes in interest rates. In particular, the value of these securities may decline when interest rates rise and will also be affected by the real estate market and by the management of the underlying properties. During periods of rising interest rates, real estate securities may lose appeal for investors who may be able to obtain higher yields from other income-producing investments. Rising interest rates may also mean that financing for property purchases and improvements is more costly and difficult to obtain. Further, real estate companies may be negatively impacted by liabilities or losses due to environmental problems, extreme weather or natural disasters. In addition, real estate values have been subject to substantial fluctuations and declines on a local, regional and national basis in the past and may continue to be in the future. Highly leveraged real estate companies are particularly vulnerable to the effects of rising interest rates and/or an economic downturn. REITs may be more volatile and/or more illiquid than other types of equity securities.

**Pricing risk.** If market conditions make it difficult to value some investments, the fund may value these investments using more subjective methods, such as fair value pricing. In such cases, the value determined for an investment could be different from the value realized upon such investment's sale. As a result, you could pay more than the market value when buying fund shares or receive less than the market value when selling fund shares.

Secondary markets may be subject to irregular trading activity, wide bid/ask spreads and extended trade settlement periods, which may prevent the fund from being able to realize full value and thus sell a security for its full valuation. This could cause a material decline in the fund's net asset value.

**Convertible securities risk.** The market value of a convertible security performs like that of a regular debt security; that is, when interest rates rise, the price of a convertible security generally declines. In addition, convertible securities are subject to the risk that the issuer will not be able to pay interest or dividends when due, and their price may change based on changes in the issuer's financial condition. Because a convertible security derives a portion of its value from the common stock into which it may be converted, market and issuer risks that apply to the underlying common stock could impact the price of the convertible security. Certain types of convertible securities may decline in value or lose their value entirely in the event the issuer's financial condition becomes significantly impaired.

**Preferred stock risk.** Preferred stock generally has a preference as to dividends and liquidation over an issuer's common stock but ranks junior to debt securities in an issuer's capital structure. Preferred stock is subject to

many of the risks associated with debt securities, including interest rate risk. In addition, preferred stock may not pay a dividend, an issuer may suspend payment of dividends on preferred stock at any time, and in certain situations an issuer may call or redeem its preferred stock or convert it to common stock.

**Securities lending risk.** Securities lending involves the risk that the fund may lose money because the borrower of the loaned securities fails to return the securities in a timely manner or at all. A delay in the recovery of loaned securities could interfere with the fund's ability to vote proxies or settle transactions. Delayed settlement may limit the ability of the fund to reinvest the proceeds of a sale of securities or prevent the fund from selling securities at times and prices it considers desirable. The fund could also lose money in the event of a decline in the value of the collateral provided for the loaned securities, or a decline in the value of any investments made with cash collateral or even a loss of rights in the collateral should the borrower of the securities fail financially while holding the securities.

**Derivatives risk.** Derivatives involve risks different from, and possibly greater than, the risks associated with investing directly in securities and other more traditional investments. Risks associated with derivatives may include the risk that the derivative is not well correlated with the underlying asset, security or index to which it relates; the risk that derivatives may result in losses or missed opportunities; the risk that the fund will be unable to sell the derivative because of an illiquid secondary market; the risk that a counterparty is unwilling or unable to meet its obligation, which risk may be heightened in derivative transactions entered into "over-the-counter" (i.e., not on an exchange or contract market); and the risk that the derivative transaction could expose the fund to the effects of leverage, which could increase the fund's exposure to the market and magnify potential losses.

There is no guarantee that derivatives, to the extent employed, will have the intended effect, and their use could cause lower returns or even losses to the fund. The use of derivatives by the fund to hedge risk may reduce the opportunity for gain by offsetting the positive effect of favorable price movements.

**Counterparty risk.** A financial institution or other counterparty with whom the fund does business, or that underwrites, distributes or guarantees any investments or contracts that the fund owns or is otherwise exposed to, may decline in financial health and become unable to honor its commitments. This could cause losses for the fund or could delay the return or delivery of collateral or other assets to the fund.

**Liquidity risk.** In certain situations, it may be difficult or impossible to sell an investment and/or the fund may sell certain investments at a price or time that is not advantageous in order to meet redemption requests or other

cash needs. Unusual market conditions, such as an unusually high volume of redemptions or other similar conditions could increase liquidity risk for the fund.

This risk can be ongoing for any security that does not trade actively or in large volumes, for any security that trades primarily on smaller markets, and for investments that typically trade only among a limited number of large investors (such as certain types of derivatives or restricted securities). In unusual market conditions, even normally liquid securities may be affected by a degree of liquidity risk (i.e., if the number and capacity of traditional market participants is reduced). This may affect only certain securities or an overall securities market.

**IPO risk.** Prices of securities bought in an initial public offering (IPO) may rise and fall rapidly, often because of investor perceptions rather than economic reasons. To the extent a mutual fund is small in size, its IPO investments may have a significant impact on its performance since they may represent a larger proportion of the fund's overall portfolio as compared to the portfolio of a larger fund.

**Operational and technology risk.** Cyber-attacks, disruptions or failures that affect the fund's service providers or counterparties, issuers of securities held by the fund, or other market participants may adversely affect the fund and its shareholders, including by causing losses for the fund or impairing fund operations. For example, the fund's or its service providers' assets or sensitive or confidential information may be misappropriated, data may be corrupted and operations may be disrupted (e.g., cyber-attacks, operational failures or broader disruptions may cause the release of private shareholder information or confidential fund information, interfere with the processing of shareholder transactions, impact the ability to calculate the fund's net asset value and impede trading). Market events and disruptions also may trigger a volume of transactions that overloads current information technology and communication systems and processes, impacting the ability to conduct the fund's operations.

While the fund and its service providers may establish business continuity and other plans and processes that seek to address the possibility of and fallout from cyber-attacks, disruptions or failures, there are inherent limitations in such plans and systems, including that they do not apply to third parties, such as fund counterparties, issuers of securities held by the fund or other market participants, as well as the possibility that certain risks have not been identified or that unknown threats may emerge in the future and there is no assurance that such plans and processes will be effective. Among other situations, disruptions (for example, pandemics or health crises) that cause prolonged periods of remote work or significant employee absences at the fund's service providers could impact the ability to conduct the fund's operations. In addition, the fund cannot directly control any

cybersecurity plans and systems put in place by its service providers, fund counterparties, issuers of securities held by the fund or other market participants.

Cyber-attacks may include unauthorized attempts by third parties to improperly access, modify, disrupt the operations of, or prevent access to the systems of the fund's service providers or counterparties, issuers of securities held by the fund or other market participants or data within them. In addition, power or communications outages, acts of god, information technology equipment malfunctions, operational errors, and inaccuracies within software or data processing systems may also disrupt business operations or impact critical data.

Cyber-attacks, disruptions, or failures may adversely affect the fund and its shareholders or cause reputational damage and subject the fund to regulatory fines, litigation costs, penalties or financial losses, reimbursement or other compensation costs, and/or additional compliance costs. In addition, cyber-attacks, disruptions, or failures involving a fund counterparty could affect such counterparty's ability to meet its obligations to the fund, which may result in losses to the fund and its shareholders. Similar types of operational and technology risks are also present for issuers of securities held by the fund, which could have material adverse consequences for such issuers, and may cause the fund's investments to lose value. Furthermore, as a result of cyber-attacks, disruptions, or failures, an exchange or market may close or issue trading halts on specific securities or the entire market, which may result in the fund being, among other things, unable to buy or sell certain securities or financial instruments or unable to accurately price its investments.

For example, the fund relies on various sources to calculate its NAV. Therefore, the fund is subject to certain operational risks associated with reliance on third party service providers and data sources. NAV calculation may be impacted by operational risks arising from factors such as failures in systems and technology. Such failures may result in delays in the calculation of the fund's NAV and/or the inability to calculate NAV over extended time periods. The fund may be unable to recover any losses associated with such failures.

## OTHER POLICIES AND RISKS

While the previous pages describe the main points of the fund's strategy and risks, there are a few other matters to know about:

- Although major changes tend to be infrequent, the fund's Board could change the fund's investment objective without seeking shareholder approval. However, the Board will provide shareholders with at least 60 days notice prior to making any changes to the fund's 80% investment policy as described herein.



- When, in the Advisor's opinion, it is advisable to adopt a temporary defensive position because of unusual and adverse or other market conditions, up to 100% of the fund's assets may be held in cash or invested in money market securities or other short-term investments. Short-term investments consist of (1) foreign and domestic obligations of sovereign governments and their agencies and instrumentalities, authorities and political subdivisions; (2) other short-term rated debt securities or, if unrated, determined to be of comparable quality in the opinion of the Advisor; (3) commercial paper; (4) bank obligations, including negotiable certificates of deposit, time deposits and bankers' acceptances; and (5) repurchase agreements. Short-term investments may also include shares of money market mutual funds. To the extent the fund invests in such instruments, the fund will not be pursuing its investment objective. However, portfolio management may choose to not use these strategies for various reasons, even in volatile market conditions.
- Portfolio management measures credit quality at the time it buys securities, using independent rating agencies or, for unrated securities, its own judgment. All securities must meet the credit quality standards applied by portfolio management at the time they are purchased. If a security's credit quality changes, portfolio management will decide what to do with the security, based on its assessment of what would most benefit the fund.
- From time to time, the fund may have a concentration of shareholder accounts holding a significant percentage of shares outstanding. Investment activities of these shareholders could have a material impact on the fund.
- Your fund assets may be at risk of being transferred to the appropriate state if you fail to maintain a valid address and/or if certain activity does not occur in your account within the time specified by state abandoned property law. Contact your financial representative or the transfer agent for additional information.
- Shareholders of the fund (which may include affiliated and/or non-affiliated registered investment companies that invest in the fund) may make relatively large redemptions or purchases of fund shares. These transactions may cause the fund to have to sell securities or invest additional cash, as the case may be. While it is impossible to predict the overall impact of these transactions over time, there could be adverse effects on the fund's performance to the extent that the fund may be required to sell securities or invest cash at times when it would not otherwise do so. These transactions could adversely impact the fund's liquidity, accelerate the recognition of taxable income if sales of securities resulted in capital gains or other income and increase transaction costs, which may adversely affect the fund's performance. These transactions could also adversely

impact the fund's ability to implement its investment strategies and pursue its investment objective, and, as a result, a larger portion of the fund's assets may be held in cash or cash equivalents. In addition, large redemptions could significantly reduce the fund's assets, which may result in an increase in the fund's expense ratio on account of expenses being spread over a smaller asset base and/or the loss of fee breakpoints.

### **For More Information**

This prospectus doesn't tell you about every policy or risk of investing in the fund. If you want more information on the fund's allowable securities and investment practices and the characteristics and risks of each one, you may want to request a copy of the Statement of Additional Information (the back cover tells you how to do this).

Keep in mind that there is no assurance that the fund will achieve its investment objective.

A complete list of the fund's portfolio holdings as of the month-end is posted on dws.com on or after the last day of the following month. More frequent posting of portfolio holdings information may be made from time to time on dws.com. The posted portfolio holdings information is available by fund and generally remains accessible at least until the date on which the fund files its Form N-CSR or publicly available Form N-PORT with the SEC for the period that includes the date as of which the posted information is current. In addition, the fund's top ten equity holdings and other fund information is posted on dws.com as of the calendar quarter-end on or after the 10th calendar day following quarter-end. The fund's Statement of Additional Information includes a description of the fund's policies and procedures with respect to the disclosure of the fund's portfolio holdings.

## **WHO MANAGES AND OVERSEES THE FUND**

### **The Investment Advisor**

DWS Investment Management Americas, Inc. ("DIMA" or the "Advisor"), with headquarters at 875 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022, is the investment advisor for the fund. Under the oversight of the Board, the Advisor makes investment decisions, buys and sells securities for the fund and conducts research that leads to these purchase and sale decisions. The Advisor is an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of DWS Group GmbH & Co. KGaA ("DWS Group"), a separate, publicly-listed financial services firm that is an indirect, majority-owned subsidiary of Deutsche Bank AG. The Advisor and its predecessors have more than 95 years of experience managing mutual funds and provide a full range of global investment advisory services to institutional and retail clients.

DWS represents the asset management activities conducted by DWS Group or any of its subsidiaries, including DIMA, other affiliated investment advisors and DWS Distributors, Inc. ("DDI" or the "Distributor"). DWS is a global organization that offers a wide range of investing

expertise and resources, including hundreds of portfolio managers and analysts and an office network that reaches the world’s major investment centers. This well-resourced global investment platform brings together a wide variety of experience and investment insight across industries, regions, asset classes and investing styles.

The Advisor may utilize the resources of its global investment platform to provide investment management services through branch offices or affiliates located outside the US. In some cases, the Advisor may also utilize its branch offices or affiliates located in the US or outside the US to perform certain services, such as trade execution, trade matching and settlement, or various administrative, back-office or other services. To the extent services are performed outside the US, such activity may be subject to both US and foreign regulation. It is possible that the jurisdiction in which the Advisor or its affiliate performs such services may impose restrictions or limitations on portfolio transactions that are different from, and in addition to, those that apply in the US.

**Management Fee.** The Advisor receives a management fee from the fund. Below is the management rate paid by the fund for the most recent fiscal year, as a percentage of the fund’s average daily net assets:

Fund Name	Fee Paid
DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP	0.592% **

\*\*Reflects the effects of expense limitations and/or fee waivers then in effect.

The following waiver is currently in effect:

For DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP, the Advisor has contractually agreed through April 30, 2025 to waive its fees and/or reimburse certain operating expenses to the extent necessary to maintain the fund’s total annual operating expenses (excluding certain expenses such as extraordinary expenses, taxes, brokerage and interest expenses and acquired funds fees and expenses) at a ratio no higher than 1.17% for Class B shares. The agreement may only be terminated with the consent of the fund’s Board.

A discussion regarding the basis for the Board’s approval of the fund’s investment management agreement and subadvisory agreement is contained in the most recent shareholder report for the annual period ended December 31 and the semi-annual period ended June 30 (see “Shareholder reports” on the back cover).

Under a separate administrative services agreement between the fund and the Advisor, the fund pays the Advisor a fee of 0.097% of the fund’s average daily net assets for providing most of the fund’s administrative services. The administrative services fee discussed above is included in the fees and expenses table under “Other expenses.”

**Multi-Manager Structure.** The Advisor, subject to the approval of the Board, has ultimate responsibility to oversee any subadvisor to the fund and to recommend the hiring, termination and replacement of subadvisors. The fund and the Advisor have received an order from the SEC that permits the Advisor to appoint or replace certain subadvisors, to manage all or a portion of the fund’s assets and enter into, amend or terminate a subadvisory agreement with certain subadvisors, in each case subject to the approval of the fund’s Board but without obtaining shareholder approval (“multi-manager structure”). The multi-manager structure applies to subadvisors that are not affiliated with the fund or the Advisor (“nonaffiliated subadvisors”), as well as subadvisors that are indirect or direct, wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Advisor or that are indirect or direct, wholly-owned subsidiaries of the same company that, indirectly or directly, wholly owns the Advisor (“wholly-owned subadvisors”). Pursuant to the SEC order, the Advisor, with the approval of the fund’s Board, has the discretion to terminate any subadvisor and allocate and reallocate the fund’s assets among any other nonaffiliated subadvisors or wholly-owned subadvisors (including terminating a nonaffiliated subadvisor and replacing it with a wholly-owned subadvisor). The fund and the Advisor are subject to the conditions imposed by the SEC order, including the condition that within 90 days of hiring a new subadvisor pursuant to the multi-manager structure, the fund will provide shareholders with an information statement containing information about the new subadvisor. The shareholders of the fund have approved the multi-manager structure described herein.

MANAGEMENT

DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP

The following Portfolio Managers are jointly and primarily responsible for the day-to-day management of the fund.

**Pankaj Bhatnagar, PhD, Head of Investment Strategy Equity.** Portfolio Manager of the fund. Began managing the fund in 2019.

- Joined DWS in 2000 with seven years of industry experience; previously, served in Quantitative Strategy roles at Nomura Securities, Credit Suisse and Salomon Brothers.
- Head of Core Equity and Head of Systematic and Quantitative Management: Americas.
- Degree in Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology; MBA, Kent State University; PhD in Finance, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Arno V. Puskar, Senior Portfolio Manager Equity.** Portfolio Manager of the fund through May 15, 2024. Began managing the fund in 2019.

- Joined DWS in 1987.
- Portfolio Manager for US Equities and Quantitative Analyst: New York.
- BS in Industrial Engineering from Lehigh University; MBA from Pepperdine University.

**Hiten Shah, Portfolio Manager Equity.** Portfolio Manager of the fund beginning May 15, 2024.

- Joined DWS in 2017 with 19 years of industry experience; previously, Senior Consultant at the firm with responsibility for the implementation of BlackRock's Aladdin platform in the US; Portfolio Manager for multi-asset portable alpha strategies at Oppenheimer Funds; Portfolio Manager for global macro and fixed income at various companies, including True North Partners, HSBC, Societe General and GE; and Analyst, Metlife Investments.
- Portfolio Manager for Quantitative Equity: New York.
- BA in Economics, Rutgers University.

The fund's Statement of Additional Information provides additional information about a portfolio manager's investments in the fund, a description of the portfolio management compensation structure and information regarding other accounts managed.

## Investing in the Fund

### YOUR INVESTMENT IN THE FUND

The information in this section may affect anyone who selects the fund as an investment option in a variable annuity contract or variable life insurance policy that offers the fund. These contracts and policies are described in separate prospectuses issued by participating insurance companies. The fund assumes no responsibility for such prospectuses.

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 [fundsus.dws.com/EN/resources/calculators.jsp](https://fundsus.dws.com/EN/resources/calculators.jsp) (the Web site does not form a part of this prospectus).

### POLICIES ABOUT TRANSACTIONS

The information in this prospectus applies to Class B shares of the fund. The fund offers two classes of shares. Class B shares are offered at net asset value and are subject to 12b-1 fees.

Technically, the shareholders of Deutsche DWS Variable Series II are the participating insurance companies (the “insurance companies”) that offer the fund as choices for holders of certain variable annuity contracts or variable life insurance policies (the “contract(s)”) issued or sponsored by the insurance companies. The insurance companies may pass through voting rights to the contract owners. The fund does not sell shares directly to the public. The fund sells shares only to separate accounts of insurance companies. As a contract owner, your premium payments are allocated to the fund by the insurance companies in accordance with your contract. Please see the contract prospectus that accompanies this prospectus for a detailed explanation of your contract. Depending on context in the prospectus, the terms “you” and “yours” refer to either a contract owner or to the insurance company that issues the contract. References to “buying,” “purchasing” or “holding” fund shares refer only to the insurance company, not the contract owner.

Please bear in mind that there are important differences between DWS retail funds available to any investor (a “Retail Fund”) and those that are only available through certain financial institutions, such as insurance companies. For example, Retail Funds, unlike the fund, are not sold

to insurance company separate accounts to fund investments in variable insurance contracts. In addition, the investment objective, policies and strategies of the fund, while similar to those of a Retail Fund, are not identical. Retail Funds may be smaller or larger than the fund and have different expense ratios than the fund. As a result, the performance of the fund and a Retail Fund will differ.

Should any conflict between contract owners arise that would require that a substantial amount of net assets be withdrawn from the fund, orderly portfolio management could be disrupted to the potential detriment of shareholders of the fund.

The fund currently does not foresee any disadvantages to the holders of variable annuity contracts or variable life insurance policies arising from the fact that the interests of the holders of such contracts and policies may differ. Nevertheless, the Board intends to monitor events in order to identify any material irreconcilable conflicts that may arise and to determine what action, if any, should be taken in any such event.

The fund has a verification process for new insurance company accounts to help the government fight the funding of terrorism and money laundering activities. Federal law requires all financial institutions to obtain, verify and record information that identifies each insurance company that opens an account. This means that when an insurance company opens an account, the fund will ask for its name, address and other information that will allow the fund to identify the company. This information will be verified to ensure the identity of all insurance companies opening an account.

For certain insurance companies, the fund might request additional information (for instance, the fund would ask for documents such as the insurance company’s articles of incorporation) to help the fund verify the insurance company’s identity.

The fund will not complete the purchase of any shares for an account until all information has been provided and the application has been submitted in “good order.” Once the application is determined to be in good order, the purchase(s) will be effected at the net asset value per share next calculated.

The fund may reject a new account application if the insurance company doesn't provide any required or requested identifying information, or for other reasons.

## BUYING AND SELLING SHARES

**The fund is open for business** each day the New York Stock Exchange is open. The fund calculates its share price for each class every business day, as of the close of regular trading on the New York Stock Exchange (typically 4:00 p.m. Eastern time, but sometimes earlier, as in the case of scheduled half-day trading, shortened trading hours due to emergency circumstances or unscheduled suspensions of trading).

The fund continuously sells shares to each insurance company separate account, without a sales charge, at the net asset value per share next determined after a proper purchase order is placed by the insurance company. The insurance company offers contract owners units in its separate accounts which correspond to shares in a fund. Each insurance company submits purchase and redemption orders to a fund based on allocation instructions for premium payments, transfer instructions and surrender or partial withdrawal requests for contract owners, as set forth in the accompanying prospectus for the contracts. These orders reflect the amount of premium payments to be invested, surrender and transfer requests, and other matters. Redemption orders are effected at the next net asset value per share determined after a proper redemption order is placed by the insurance company. Contract owners should look at their contract prospectuses for redemption procedures and fees.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT BUYING AND SELLING SHARES

- After receiving a contract owner's order, the insurance company buys or sells shares at the net asset value next calculated on any day the fund is open for business. A temporary intraday suspension or disruption of regular trading on the New York Stock Exchange will not be treated as the close of regular trading for that day if trading resumes and therefore will not impact the time at which the fund calculates its share price on that day. In the event of an early close of regular trading on the New York Stock Exchange, such as in the case of scheduled half-day trading, shortened trading hours due to emergency circumstances or unscheduled suspensions of trading, the fund will calculate its share price as of the early close on that day. In such event, an order received before the early close will generally be effected at the share price calculated that day and an order received after the early close will generally be effected at the share price calculated on the next business day.
- Unless otherwise instructed, the fund normally makes payment of the proceeds from the sale of shares the next business day but always within seven calendar days.
- Redemptions will generally be in the form of cash, though the fund reserves the right to redeem in kind as described below. The fund typically expects to satisfy redemption requests by using available cash or by selling portfolio securities if available cash is not sufficient to meet redemptions. The fund may utilize an existing line of credit for temporary coverage in the event of a cash shortfall. The fund may also utilize interfund lending, though such use is expected to be rare. The fund may use any of these methods of satisfying redemption requests under normal or stressed market conditions. During periods of distressed market conditions, when a significant portion of the fund's portfolio may be comprised of less-liquid investments, the fund may be more likely to pay redemption proceeds by giving you securities.
- The fund does not issue share certificates.
- The fund reserves the right to reject purchases of shares for any reason.
- The fund reserves the right to withdraw or suspend the offering of shares at any time.
- The fund reserves the right to reject purchases of shares or to suspend or postpone redemptions at times when the New York Stock Exchange is closed (other than customary closings), trading is restricted or when an emergency exists that prevents a fund from disposing of its portfolio securities or pricing its shares.
- The fund may refuse, cancel or rescind any purchase order; freeze any account (meaning the insurance company will not be able to purchase shares in its account); suspend account services; and/or involuntarily redeem the account if we think that the account is being used for fraudulent or illegal purposes by the insurance company; one or more of these actions will be taken when, at the sole discretion of the fund, they are deemed to be in the fund's best interests or when the fund is requested or compelled to do so by governmental authority or by applicable law.
- The fund may close and liquidate an account if the fund is unable to verify provided information, or for other reasons; if the fund decides to close the account, the shares will be redeemed at the net asset value per share next calculated after we determine to close the account; the insurance company may be subject to gain or loss on the redemption of the fund shares and may incur tax liability.
- The fund may pay for shares sold by "redeeming in kind," that is, by distributing to you marketable securities (which typically will involve brokerage costs for you to liquidate) rather than cash, but which will be taxable to the same extent as a redemption for cash; the fund generally won't make a redemption in kind unless your requests over a 90-day period total more than \$250,000 or 1% of the value of the fund's net assets, whichever is less.



- A purchase order from an insurance company separate account may not be accepted if the sale of fund shares has been suspended or if it is determined that the purchase would be detrimental to the interests of the fund.
- Neither DWS nor the fund will be responsible for any losses resulting from fraud if we reasonably believe that any order or instruction was made by an individual authorized to act on the account. We will consider all transactions to be properly processed if discrepancies are not reported promptly.

**Market timing policies and procedures.** Short-term and excessive trading of fund shares may present risks to long-term shareholders, including potential dilution in the value of fund shares, interference with the efficient management of the fund's portfolio (including losses on the sale of investments), taxable gains to remaining shareholders and increased brokerage and administrative costs. These risks may be more pronounced if the fund invests in certain securities, such as those that trade in foreign markets, are illiquid or do not otherwise have "readily available market quotations." Certain investors may seek to employ short-term trading strategies aimed at exploiting variations in portfolio valuation that arise from the nature of the securities held by the fund (e.g., "time zone arbitrage"). The fund discourages short-term and excessive trading and has adopted policies and procedures that are intended to detect and deter short-term and excessive trading.

The fund also reserves the right to reject or cancel a purchase or exchange order for any reason without prior notice. For example, the fund may in its discretion reject or cancel a purchase or an exchange order even if the transaction is not subject to the transaction limitation described below if the Advisor believes that there appears to be a pattern of short-term or excessive trading activity by a shareholder or deems any other trading activity harmful or disruptive to the fund. The fund, through its Advisor and transfer agent, will monitor changes in investment direction (CID) transactions that exceed a certain dollar amount by a shareholder within a fund within a specified time period. A CID transaction is a transaction opposite to the prior transaction, which can be a purchase, redemption or exchange of the same fund. The fund may take other trading activity into account if the fund believes such activity is of an amount or frequency that may be harmful to long-term shareholders or disruptive to portfolio management. The Advisor's practices for identifying excessive short-term trading activity (e.g., the number of CID transactions, the dollar threshold and the time period) may change from time to time. If the Advisor determines that an investor has engaged in excessive short-term trading, the Advisor may issue the shareholder and/or the shareholder's financial intermediary, if any, a written warning and/or may block the shareholder from further purchases of or exchanges into the fund's shares.

The fund reserves the right to maintain a block indefinitely if it deems that the shareholder's activity was harmful to the fund, or that the pattern of activity suggests a pattern of abuse. The rights of a shareholder to redeem shares of a DWS fund are not affected by a block on purchases and exchanges.

The fund may make exceptions to the transaction policy for certain types of transactions if, in the opinion of the Advisor, the transactions do not represent short-term or excessive trading or are not abusive or harmful to the fund, such as, but not limited to, systematic transactions, required minimum retirement distributions, transactions initiated by the fund or administrator and transactions by certain qualified funds-of-funds.

In certain circumstances where shareholders hold shares of the fund through an insurance company, the fund may rely upon the insurance company's policy to deter short-term or excessive trading if the Advisor believes that the insurance company's policy is reasonably designed to detect and deter transactions that are not in the best interests of the fund. An insurance company's policy relating to short-term or excessive trading may be more or less restrictive than the DWS funds' policy, may permit certain transactions not permitted by the DWS funds' policies, or prohibit transactions not subject to the DWS funds' policies.

The Advisor may also accept undertakings from an insurance company to enforce short-term or excessive trading policies on behalf of the fund that provide a substantially similar level of protection for the fund against such transactions. For example, certain insurance companies may have contractual, legal or operational restrictions that prevent them from blocking an account. In such instances, the insurance company may use alternate techniques that the Advisor considers to be a reasonable substitute for such a block.

In addition, if the fund invests some portion of its assets in foreign securities, it has adopted certain fair valuation practices intended to protect the fund from "time zone arbitrage" with respect to its foreign securities holdings and other trading practices that seek to exploit variations in portfolio valuation that arise from the nature of the securities held by the fund. (See "How the Fund Calculates Share Price.")

There is no assurance that these policies and procedures will be effective in limiting short-term and excessive trading in all cases. For example, the Advisor may not be able to effectively monitor, detect or limit short-term or excessive trading by underlying shareholders that occurs through omnibus accounts maintained by broker-dealers or other financial intermediaries. The Advisor reviews trading activity at the omnibus level to detect short-term or excessive trading. If the Advisor has reason to suspect that short-term or excessive trading is occurring at the omnibus level, the Advisor will contact the financial intermediary to request underlying shareholder level activity. Depending

on the amount of fund shares held in such omnibus accounts (which may represent most of the fund's shares), short-term and/or excessive trading of fund shares could adversely affect long-term shareholders in the fund. If short-term or excessive trading is identified, the Advisor will take appropriate action.

The fund's market timing policies and procedures may be modified or terminated at any time.

## HOW TO RECEIVE ACCOUNT INFORMATION

If you are a contract owner, you should contact your insurance company or the organization that provides recordkeeping services for information about your account.

Please see the contract prospectus that accompanies this prospectus for the customer service telephone number.

## HOW TO SELECT SHARES

Shares in the fund are available in connection with certain variable annuity and life insurance arrangements. Each insurance company has different provisions about how and when their contract owners may select fund shares. Each insurance company is responsible for communicating its contract owners' instructions to the fund. Contract owners should contact their insurance company to effect transactions in connection with the fund.

## HOW THE FUND CALCULATES SHARE PRICE

To calculate net asset value per share, or NAV, the fund uses the following equation:

$$\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Total} \\ \text{Assets} \end{array} - \begin{array}{c} \text{Total} \\ \text{Liabilities} \end{array} \right) \div \begin{array}{c} \text{Total Number of} \\ \text{Shares Outstanding} \end{array} = \text{NAV}$$

The price at which you buy and sell shares for the fund is the NAV. To obtain the fund's most recent share price, go to [dws.com](http://dws.com) (we have included our Web site address as an inactive textual reference and do not intend it to be an active link to our Web site; the Web site does not form a part of this prospectus) or call the telephone number included in this prospectus.

The Board has designated the Advisor as the valuation designee for the fund pursuant to Rule 2a-5 under the 1940 Act. The Advisor's 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 when pricing service prices or market quotations are not readily available, including when a security's value or a meaningful portion of the value of the fund's portfolio is believed to have been materially affected by a significant event, such as a natural disaster, an economic event like a bankruptcy filing, or a substantial fluctuation in domestic or foreign markets that has occurred between the close of the exchange or market on which the security is principally traded (for

example, a foreign exchange or market) and the close of the New York Stock Exchange. In such a case, the fund's value for a security is likely to be different from the last quoted market price or pricing service prices. In addition, due to the subjective and variable nature of fair value pricing, it is possible that the value determined for a particular asset may be materially different from the value realized upon such asset's sale.

It is expected that the greater the percentage of fund assets that is invested in non-US securities, the more extensive will be the fund's use of fair value pricing. This is intended to reduce the fund's exposure to "time zone arbitrage" and other harmful trading practices. (See "Market timing policies and procedures.")

To the extent that the fund invests in securities that are traded primarily in foreign markets, the value of its holdings could change at a time when you aren't able to buy or sell fund shares through the contract. This is because some foreign markets are open on days and at times when the fund doesn't price the shares.

## FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARY SUPPORT PAYMENTS

The Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates may pay additional compensation, out of their own assets and not as an additional charge to the fund, to selected affiliated and unaffiliated brokers, dealers, participating insurance companies or other financial intermediaries ("financial representatives") in connection with the sale and/or distribution of fund shares or the retention and/or servicing of fund investors and fund shares ("revenue sharing"). Such revenue sharing payments are in addition to any distribution or service fees payable under any Rule 12b-1 or service plan of the fund, any recordkeeping/sub-transfer agency/networking fees payable by the fund (generally through the Distributor or an affiliate) and/or the Distributor or Advisor to certain financial representatives for performing such services and any sales charges, commissions, non-cash compensation arrangements expressly permitted under applicable rules of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority or other concessions described in the fee table or elsewhere in this prospectus or the Statement of Additional Information as payable to all financial representatives. For example, the Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates may, using their legitimate profits, compensate financial representatives for providing the fund with "shelf space" or access to a third party platform (including the costs associated with establishing and maintaining the fund on such platform) or fund offering list or other marketing programs, including, without limitation, inclusion of the fund on preferred or recommended sales lists, mutual fund "supermarket" platforms and other formal sales programs; granting the Distributor access to the financial representative's sales force; granting the Distributor access to the financial representative's conferences and meetings; assistance in training and educating

the financial representative's personnel; and obtaining other forms of marketing support. In addition, revenue sharing payments may consist of the Distributor's and/or its affiliates' payment or reimbursement of ticket charges that would otherwise be assessed by a financial representative on an investor's fund transactions.

The level of revenue sharing payments made to financial representatives may be a fixed fee or based upon one or more of the following factors: gross sales, current assets and/or number of accounts of the fund attributable to the financial representative, the particular fund or fund type or other measures as agreed to by the Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates and the financial representatives or any combination thereof. The amount of these payments is determined at the discretion of the Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates from time to time, may be substantial, and may be different for different financial representatives based on, for example, the nature of the services provided by the financial representative.

The Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates currently make revenue sharing payments from their own assets in connection with the sale and/or distribution of DWS fund shares or the retention and/or servicing of investors to financial representatives in amounts that generally range from 0.01% up to 0.52% of assets of the fund serviced and maintained by the financial representative, 0.05% to 0.25% of sales of the fund attributable to the financial representative, a flat fee of up to \$95,000, or any combination thereof. These amounts are annual figures typically paid on a quarterly basis and are subject to change at the discretion of the Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates. Receipt of, or the prospect of receiving, this additional compensation may influence your financial representative's recommendation of the fund or of any particular share class of the fund. You should review your financial representative's compensation disclosure and/or talk to your financial representative to obtain more information on how this compensation may have influenced your financial representative's recommendation of the fund. Additional information regarding these revenue sharing payments is included in the fund's Statement of Additional Information, which is available to you on request at no charge (see the back cover of this prospectus for more information on how to request a copy of the Statement of Additional Information).

The Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates may also make such revenue sharing payments to financial representatives under the terms discussed above in connection with the distribution of both DWS funds and non-DWS funds by financial representatives to retirement plans that obtain recordkeeping services from ADP, Inc. or to 403(b) plans that obtain recordkeeping services from Ascensus, Inc. on the DWS-branded retirement plan platform (the "Platform"). The level of revenue sharing payments is based upon sales of both the DWS funds and the

non-DWS funds by the financial representative on the Platform or current assets of both the DWS funds and the non-DWS funds serviced and maintained by the financial representative on the Platform.

It is likely that broker-dealers that execute portfolio transactions for the fund will include firms that also sell shares of the DWS funds to their customers. However, the Advisor will not consider sales of DWS fund shares as a factor in the selection of broker-dealers to execute portfolio transactions for the DWS funds. Accordingly, the Advisor has implemented policies and procedures reasonably designed to prevent its traders from considering sales of DWS fund shares as a factor in the selection of broker-dealers to execute portfolio transactions for the fund. In addition, the Advisor, the Distributor and/or their affiliates will not use fund brokerage to pay for their obligation to provide additional compensation to financial representatives as described above.

## **DISTRIBUTIONS**

The fund intends to declare and distribute dividends from its net investment income and capital gains, if any, annually. The fund may make additional distributions if necessary.

All distributions will be reinvested in shares of a fund unless we are informed by an insurance company that they should be paid out in cash. The insurance companies will be informed about the amount and character of distributions from the fund for federal income tax purposes.

## **TAXES**

The fund intends to qualify each year as a regulated investment company under Subchapter M of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), and intends to meet all requirements necessary to avoid paying any federal income or excise taxes.

Generally, owners of variable annuity and variable life contracts are not subject to current federal income taxation on income or gains realized with respect to such contracts. However, some distributions from such contracts, whether made prior to or during the annuity payment period, may be taxable at ordinary income tax rates. In addition, distributions made to an owner who is younger than 59½ may be subject to a 10% penalty tax. For further information concerning federal income tax consequences for the holders of variable annuity contracts and variable life insurance policies, such holders should consult the prospectus used in connection with the issuance of their particular contracts or policies.

In order for investors to receive the favorable federal income tax treatment available to holders of variable annuity and variable life contracts, the separate accounts underlying such contracts, as well as the funds in which such accounts invest, must meet certain diversification requirements. The fund intends to diversify its assets such

that a separate account investing in the fund will comply with these requirements with respect to the amounts invested in a fund. If a fund or separate account does not meet such requirements or if a fund were to fail to qualify as a regulated investment company for any taxable year and could not or did not cure such failure, income allocable to the contracts associated with the separate account may be taxable currently for federal income tax purposes to the holders of such contracts and income from prior periods with respect to such contracts also could be taxable, most likely in the year of the failure. In addition, if a fund were to fail to qualify and be eligible for treatment as a regulated investment company for any taxable year and could not or did not cure such failure, the fund would be subject to tax on its taxable income at corporate rates.

Under Treasury regulations, insurance companies holding the separate accounts may have to report to the IRS losses above a certain amount resulting from a sale or disposition of a fund's shares.

The discussion above is generally based on the assumption that shares of a fund will be respected as owned by insurance company separate accounts. If this is not the case (for example, because the IRS finds an impermissible level of "investor control" over the investment options underlying variable contracts), the advantageous federal income tax treatment provided in respect of insurance company separate accounts under the Code will no longer be available. In that situation, the person or persons determined to own the fund shares will be currently taxed for federal income tax purposes on fund distributions, and on the proceeds of any redemption of fund shares.

Participating insurance companies should consult their own tax advisors as to whether distributions from a fund are subject to federal income tax if they are retained as part of policy reserves.

Fund investments in securities of foreign issuers may be subject to withholding and other taxes at the source, including on dividend or interest payments, which will reduce a fund's return on such securities.

The fund's investments in certain debt obligations may cause the fund to recognize taxable income in excess of the cash generated by such investments. Thus, the fund could be required at times to liquidate other investments in order to satisfy its distribution requirements.

The preceding is a brief summary of certain of the relevant federal income tax considerations. Because each shareholder's and contract holder's tax situation is unique, ask your tax professional about the tax consequences of your investments, including possible federal, foreign, state or local taxes.

## **MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION FEES**

Deutsche DWS Variable Series II has adopted a 12b-1 plan for the fund's Class B shares. Under the plan, Deutsche DWS Variable Series II may make quarterly payments to

the Distributor for distribution and shareholder servicing related expenses incurred or paid by the Distributor or a participating insurance company. No such payment shall be made with respect to any quarterly period in excess of an amount determined for such period at the annual rate of 0.25% of the average daily net assets of Class B shares during that quarterly period. Depending on the participating insurance company's corporate structure and applicable state law, the distributor may remit payments to the participating insurance company's affiliated broker-dealers or other affiliated company rather than to the participating insurance company itself.

Because 12b-1 fees for Class B shares are paid out of fund assets on an ongoing basis, they will, over time, increase the cost of investment in Class B shares and may cost more than other types of sales charges.

Examples of expenses payable under the plan include the costs of printing and mailing materials (such as fund prospectuses, shareholder reports, fund advertisements and sales literature), holding seminars and sales meetings, providing customer service to policyholders and sales compensation.



## Financial Highlights

The financial highlights are designed to help you understand recent financial performance. The figures in the first part of the table are for a single share. The total return figures represent the percentage that an investor in the fund would have earned (or lost), assuming all dividends and distributions were reinvested. This information has been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, whose report, along with

the fund's financial statements, is included in the fund's annual report (see "Shareholder reports" on the back cover). This information 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. These charges and fees will reduce returns.

### DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP — Class B

	Years Ended December 31,				
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
<b>Selected Per Share Data</b>					
<b>Net asset value, beginning of period</b>	<b>\$12.72</b>	<b>\$ 15.46</b>	<b>\$11.99</b>	<b>\$13.82</b>	<b>\$12.20</b>
<i>Income (loss) from investment operations:</i>					
Net investment income <sup>a</sup>	.10	.10	.06	.13	.13
Net realized and unrealized gain (loss)	1.66	(2.58)	3.53	(.90)	2.53 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Total from investment operations</b>	<b>1.76</b>	<b>(2.48)</b>	<b>3.59</b>	<b>(.77)</b>	<b>2.66</b>
<i>Less distributions from:</i>					
Net investment income	(.11)	(.06)	(.12)	(.13)	(.05)
Net realized gains	(.51)	(.20)	—	(.93)	(.99)
<b>Total distributions</b>	<b>(.62)</b>	<b>(.26)</b>	<b>(.12)</b>	<b>(1.06)</b>	<b>(1.04)</b>
<b>Net asset value, end of period</b>	<b>\$13.86</b>	<b>\$ 12.72</b>	<b>\$15.46</b>	<b>\$11.99</b>	<b>\$13.82</b>
Total Return (%) <sup>c</sup>	14.59	(16.14)	30.04	(2.18)	22.32 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Ratios to Average Net Assets and Supplemental Data</b>					
Net assets, end of period (\$ millions)	17	16	21	17	17
Ratio of expenses before expense reductions (%) <sup>d</sup>	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.25	1.25
Ratio of expenses after expense reductions (%) <sup>d</sup>	1.18	1.20	1.20	1.19	1.19
Ratio of net investment income (%)	.79	.77	.40	1.21	.99
Portfolio turnover rate (%)	28	33	32	43	55

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.



## Appendix

### HYPOTHETICAL EXPENSE SUMMARY

Using the annual fund operating expense ratios presented in the fee tables in the fund's prospectus, the Hypothetical Expense Summary shows the estimated fees and expenses, in actual dollars, that would be charged on a hypothetical investment of \$10,000 in the fund held for the next 10 years and the impact of such fees and expenses on fund returns for each year and cumulatively, assuming a 5% return for each year. The historical rate of return for the fund may be higher or lower than 5% and, for money market funds, is typically less than 5%. The tables also assume that all dividends and distributions are reinvested. The annual fund expense ratios shown are net of any contractual fee waivers or expense reimbursements, if

any, for the period of the contractual commitment. Also, please note that if you are investing through a third party provider, that provider may have fees and expenses separate from those of the fund that are not reflected here. Mutual fund fees and expenses fluctuate over time and actual expenses may be higher or lower than those shown.

The Hypothetical Expense Summary should not be used or construed as an offer to sell, a solicitation of an offer to buy or a recommendation or endorsement of any specific mutual fund. You should carefully review the fund's prospectus to consider the investment objective, risks, expenses and charges of the fund prior to investing.

### DWS Small Mid Cap Value VIP — Class B

	Maximum Sales Charge: 0.00%	Initial Hypothetical Investment: \$10,000		Assumed Rate of Return: 5%	
Year	Cumulative Return Before Fees & Expenses	Annual Fund Expense Ratios	Cumulative Return After Fees & Expenses	Hypothetical Year-End Balance After Fees & Expenses	Annual Fees & Expenses
1	5.00%	1.17%	3.83%	\$10,383.00	\$ 119.24
2	10.25%	1.24%	7.73%	\$10,773.40	\$ 131.17
3	15.76%	1.24%	11.78%	\$11,178.48	\$ 136.10
4	21.55%	1.24%	15.99%	\$11,598.79	\$ 141.22
5	27.63%	1.24%	20.35%	\$12,034.91	\$ 146.53
6	34.01%	1.24%	24.87%	\$12,487.42	\$ 152.04
7	40.71%	1.24%	29.57%	\$12,956.95	\$ 157.76
8	47.75%	1.24%	34.44%	\$13,444.13	\$ 163.69
9	55.13%	1.24%	39.50%	\$13,949.63	\$ 169.84
10	62.89%	1.24%	44.74%	\$14,474.13	\$ 176.23
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$1,493.82</b>

### ADDITIONAL INDEX INFORMATION

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

## TO GET MORE INFORMATION

**Shareholder reports.** Additional information about the fund's investments is available in the fund's annual and semi-annual reports to shareholders. In the annual report, you will find a discussion of the market conditions and investment strategies that significantly affected fund performance during its last fiscal year.

**Statement of Additional Information (SAI).** This tells you more about the fund's features and policies, including additional risk information. The SAI is incorporated by reference into this document (meaning that it's legally part of this prospectus).

For a free copy of any of these documents or to request other information about the fund, contact DWS at the telephone number or address listed below. SAI's and shareholder reports are also available through the DWS Web site at [dws.com](http://dws.com). These documents and other information about the fund are available from the EDGAR

Database on the SEC's Internet site at [sec.gov](http://sec.gov). If you like, you may obtain copies of this information, after paying a duplicating fee, by e-mailing a request to [publicinfo@sec.gov](mailto:publicinfo@sec.gov).

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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<b>DWS</b>	222 South Riverside Plaza Chicago, IL 60606-5808 <a href="http://dws.com">dws.com</a>  (800) 728-3337
<b>Distributor</b>	DWS Distributors, Inc. 222 South Riverside Plaza Chicago, IL 60606-5808 (800) 621-1148
<b>SEC File Number</b>	Deutsche DWS Variable Series II <b>811-05002</b>

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