

# How to complete the price information in complex products

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## Syllabus

- Shapes and patterns of probability distributions for different financial products
- The significance of the price information as a mean of a risk-neutral probability distribution
- Significance Tests
- Recovering information to supplement the price
  - Proposal 1
  - Proposal 2
  - Proposal 3
- Conclusions



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## Syllabus

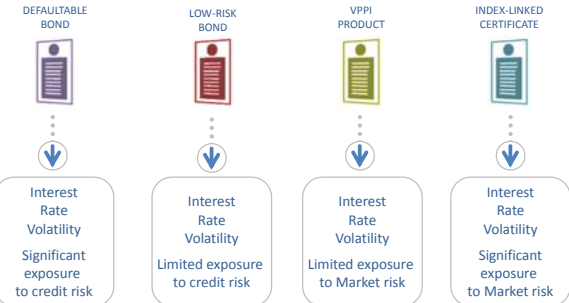
- Shapes and patterns of probability distributions for different financial products
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## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

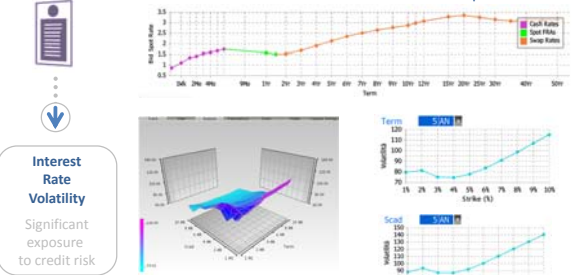
The analysis of implied probability distributions requires the estimate of all the relevant risk factors connected with the financial structure of each product



4

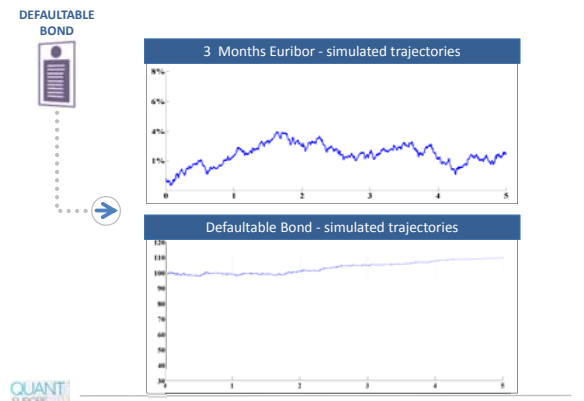
## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

Markets data are used to estimate the relevant risk factors connected with the financial structure of the product



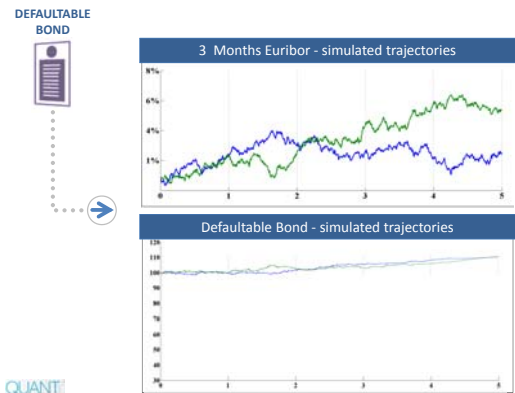
5

## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions



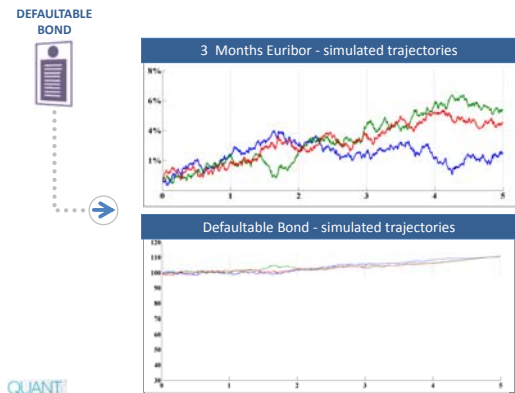
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## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions



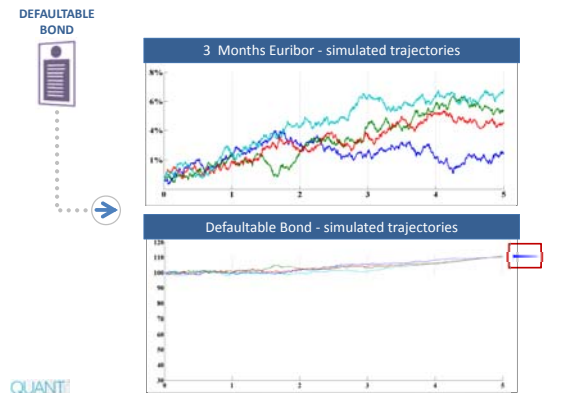
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## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions



8

## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions



9

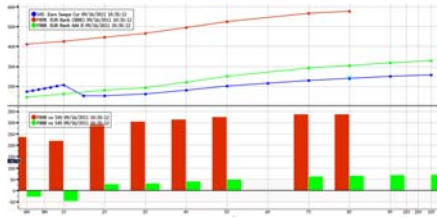
## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

DEFAULTABLE  
BOND



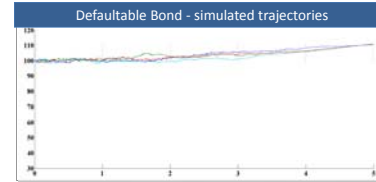
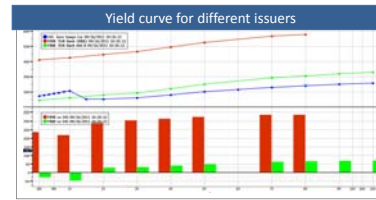
Interest  
Rate  
Volatility  
Significant  
exposure  
to credit risk

Markets data are used to estimate the relevant risk factors connected with the financial structure of the product



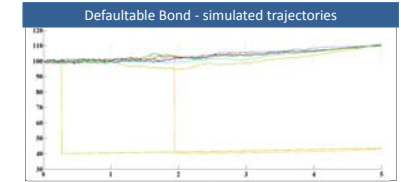
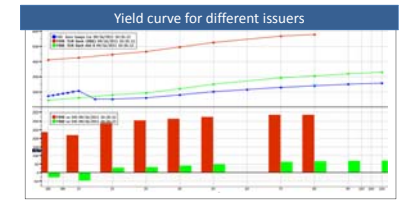
## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

DEFAULTABLE  
BOND



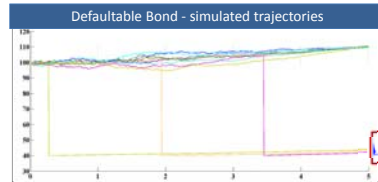
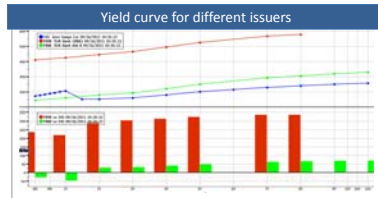
## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

DEFAULTABLE  
BOND



## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

DEFAULTABLE  
BOND

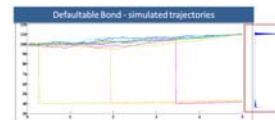
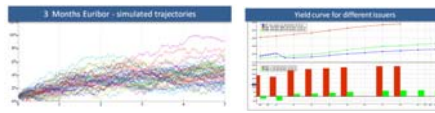


## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

DEFAULTABLE  
BOND



The risk factors define the product values over time and at expiry date



## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

DEFAULTABLE  
BOND



The final values of the product provide the probability distribution of the potential returns (so-called *pricing at maturity*)...



**Possible Outcomes**  
Pricing at maturity

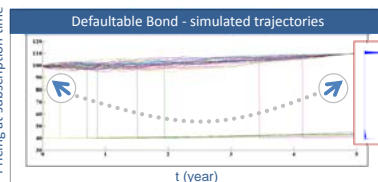
## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

DEFAULTABLE  
BOND



... the "fair value" of the product at the issue date is obtained, like in the *best practice* of the pricing procedures of intermediaries, by evaluating the expected discounted value of this distribution.

Fair Price  
Pricing at subscription time



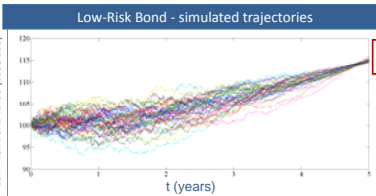
Potential Returns  
Pricing at Maturity

## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

LOW-RISK  
BOND



Limited exposure to credit risk corresponds to a lower (or zero) number of trajectories incurring in a *default event*.

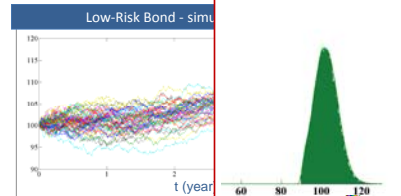


## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

LOW-RISK  
BOND



Limited exposure to credit risk correspond to a lower (or zero) number of trajectories incurring in a *default event*.

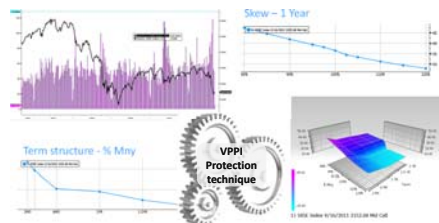


**Possible Outcomes**  
Pricing at maturity

## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

### VPPI PRODUCT

Markets data are used to estimate the relevant risk factors connected with the financial structure of the product

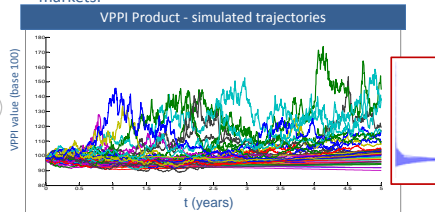


VPPI technique is aimed at protecting the initial value of the financial investment over a specified time horizon and obtaining possible gains by limited exposure to the equity markets.

## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

### VPPI PRODUCT

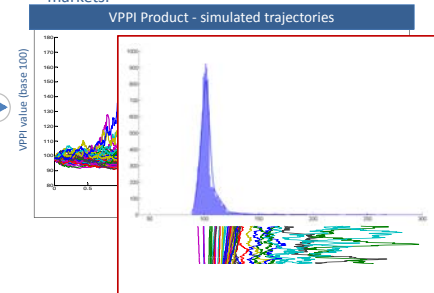
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## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

### VPPI PRODUCT

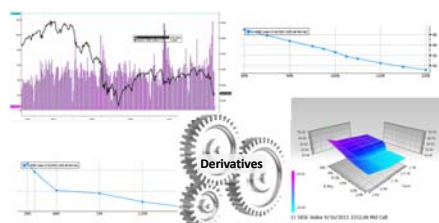
VPPI technique is aimed at protecting the initial value of the financial investment over a specified time horizon and obtaining possible gains by limited exposure to the equity markets.



## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

### INDEX LINKED CERTIFICATE

Markets data are used to estimate the relevant risk factors connected with the financial structure of the product

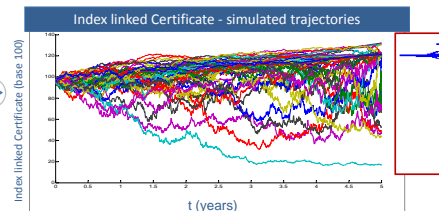


The index-linked certificate is characterised by a complex financial engineering that makes intensive use of different derivatives components. These derivatives link the performances of the product to the variability of an equity index.

## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

### INDEX LINKED CERTIFICATE

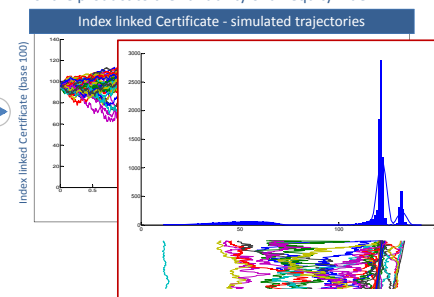
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## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

### INDEX LINKED CERTIFICATE

The index-linked certificate is characterised by a complex financial engineering that makes intensive use of diverse derivatives components. These derivatives link the performances of the product to the variability of an equity index.



## Shapes and patterns of probability distributions

### DEFAULTABLE BOND



Fair Price  
at time zero  
is a  
Weighted  
average

## Syllabus

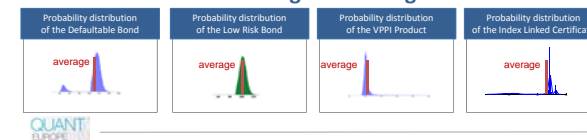
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## The significance of the price information: Intuition



Fair Price at time zero is a **weighted average**

first moment of the probability distribution at expiry date  
is also a **weighted average**



### The significance of the price information: Intuition



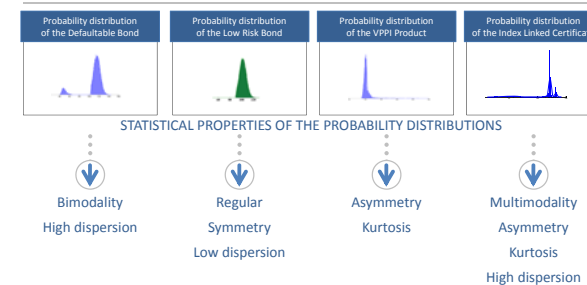
**Working Hypothesis:** The calculated fair price is the same for completely different financial structures

### The significance of the price information: Intuition



**Question:** How much information about the original probability distribution the price will convey in each case analyzed?

### The significance of the price information: Intuition



#### STATISTICAL PROPERTIES OF THE PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTIONS

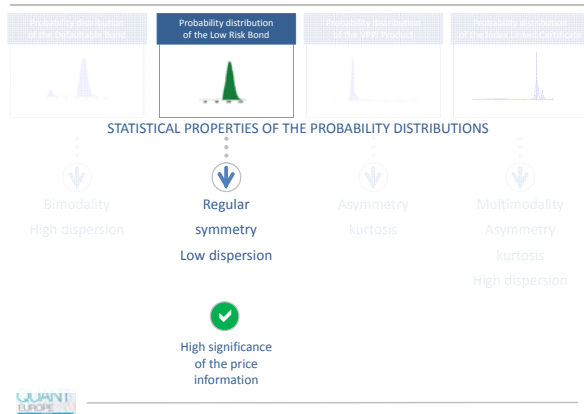
Bimodality  
High dispersion

Regular  
Symmetry  
Low dispersion

Asymmetry  
Kurtosis

Multimodality  
Asymmetry  
Kurtosis  
High dispersion

### The significance of the price information: Intuition



#### STATISTICAL PROPERTIES OF THE PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTIONS

Bimodality  
High dispersion

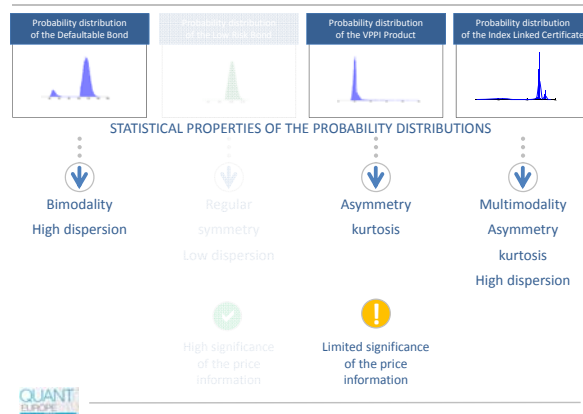
Regular  
symmetry  
Low dispersion

Asymmetry  
kurtosis

Multimodality  
Asymmetry  
kurtosis  
High dispersion

High significance of the price information

### The significance of the price information: Intuition



#### STATISTICAL PROPERTIES OF THE PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTIONS

Bimodality  
High dispersion

Regular  
symmetry  
Low dispersion

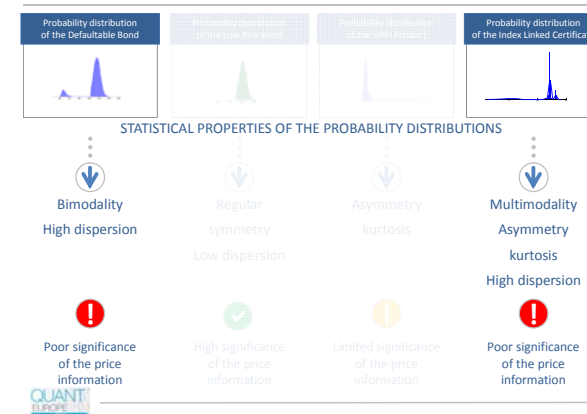
Asymmetry  
kurtosis

Multimodality  
Asymmetry  
kurtosis  
High dispersion

High significance of the price information

Limited significance of the price information

### The significance of the price information: Intuition



#### STATISTICAL PROPERTIES OF THE PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTIONS

Bimodality  
High dispersion

Regular  
symmetry  
Low dispersion

Asymmetry  
kurtosis

Multimodality  
Asymmetry  
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High dispersion

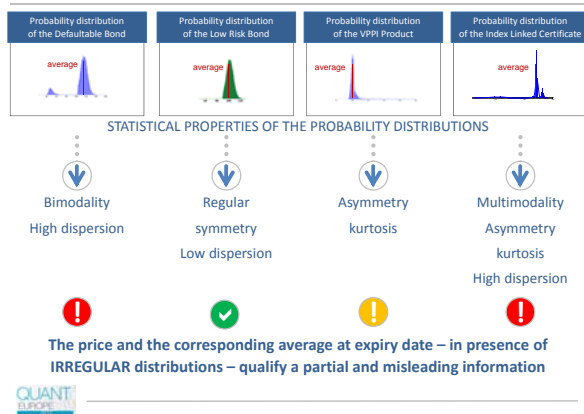
Poor significance of the price information

High significance of the price information

Limited significance of the price information

Poor significance of the price information

### The significance of the price information: Intuition



#### STATISTICAL PROPERTIES OF THE PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTIONS

Bimodality  
High dispersion

Regular  
symmetry  
Low dispersion

Asymmetry  
kurtosis

Multimodality  
Asymmetry  
kurtosis  
High dispersion



The price and the corresponding average at expiry date – in presence of IRREGULAR distributions – qualify a partial and misleading information

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### Significance tests

Significance of the price information

As a weighted average, the price is strictly connected with the first moment of the probability distribution

As the literature suggests, in presence of multimodality and irregular shapes for the probability distributions, the number of moments necessary to properly describe the probability distribution increases dramatically.

See:

- Shohat, Tamarkin, 1943 - American Mathematical Survey
- Szego, 1959 - American Mathematical Society
- Totik, 2000 – Journal of Analytical Mathematics
- Gavriliadis, Athanassoulis, 2009 – Journal of Computational and Applied Mathematics

Significance tests

!

Significance of the price information

...

→

Mathematical Basis to test the significance of the price information

In fact, having defined the following quantities:

$(\mu_1, \mu_2, \dots, \mu_{2k})$  Vector of 2k moments for the probability distribution  $f(x)$

$$P_k(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{H_{2k} H_{2k-2}}} D_k(x) \quad \text{Christoffel Basis Polynomials}$$

where

$$D_k(x) = \det \begin{bmatrix} \mu_0 & \mu_1 & \dots & \mu_k \\ \dots & \dots & \dots & \dots \\ \mu_{k-1} & \mu_k & \dots & \mu_{2k-1} \\ 1 & x & \dots & x^k \end{bmatrix} \quad H_{2k} = \begin{bmatrix} \mu_0 & \dots & \mu_k \\ \dots & \dots & \dots \\ \mu_k & \dots & \mu_{2k} \end{bmatrix} \quad H_{-2} = H_0 = 1$$



Significance tests

!

Significance of the price information

...

→

Mathematical Basis to test the significance of the price information

It's possible then to define the **Christoffel function** in the form below:

$$\lambda_k(x) = \left[ \sum_{n=0}^k |P_n(x)|^2 \right]^{-1}$$

Provided that a closed interval  $[a, b]$  for the probability density support can be identified and that in the interval  $[a, b]$  the function  $f(x)$  is bounded, the following limit condition holds:

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} k \lambda_k(x) = \pi \sqrt{(x-a)(b-x)} \cdot f(x)$$



Significance tests

!

Significance of the price information

...

→

Mathematical Basis to test the significance of the price information

For  $k$  finite, the limit condition implies that the probability function  $f(x)$  can be approximated by the following functional:

$$f(x) \approx f_{AP,k}(x) = \frac{k}{c_0 \pi \sqrt{(x-a)(b-x)}} \lambda_k(x) \quad \dots \rightarrow \text{Gavriliadis, Athanassoulis, 2009 - Journal of Computational and Applied Mathematics}$$

with  $x \in [a, b]$ .  $c_0$  is a normalizing factor.



Significance tests

!

Significance of the price information

...

→

Mathematical Basis to test the significance of the price information

For  $k$  finite, the limit condition implies that the probability function  $f(x)$  can be approximated by the following functional:

$$f(x) \approx f_{AP,k}(x) = \frac{k}{c_0 \pi \sqrt{(x-a)(b-x)}} \lambda_k(x)$$

with  $x \in [a, b]$ .  $c_0$  is a normalizing factor.

It's then immediate to apply the approximating formula for different values of  $k$  in order to test the accuracy of the approximation for the probability distributions corresponding to our different financial products



Significance tests

!

Bimodality  
High dispersion

Significance test of the price information

Reconstructed Probability distributions

Original

8 moments reconstruction

12 moments reconstruction

16 moments reconstruction

DEFAULTABLE BOND

At least 16 moments are needed in order to obtain a satisfactory approximation of the original distribution. The information content of the first moment seems very limited.



Significance tests

✓

Regular symmetry  
Low dispersion

Significance test of the price information

Reconstructed Probability distributions

Original

2 moments reconstruction

4 moments reconstruction

6 moments reconstruction

LOW-RISK BOND

Only 4 moments are sufficient in order to describe properly the original distribution. The information content of the first moment can be considered adequate.



Significance tests

!

Asymmetry  
kurtosis

Significance test of the price information

Reconstructed Probability distributions

Original

4 moments reconstruction

8 moments reconstruction

12 moments reconstruction

VPPI PRODUCT

12 moments describe correctly the pattern of the original distribution. The information content of the first moment needs to be integrated.



Significance tests

!

Multimodality  
Asymmetry  
kurtosis  
High dispersion

Significance test of the price information

Reconstructed Probability distributions

Original

12 moments reconstruction

16 moments reconstruction

20 moments reconstruction

INDEX LINKED CERTIFICATE

At least 20 moments are needed in order to obtain a satisfactory approximation of the original distribution. The information content of the first moment seems very limited.



Significance tests

Probability distribution of the Defaultable Bond

Probability distribution of the Low Risk Bond

Probability distribution of the VPPI Product

Probability distribution of the Index Linked Certificate

average

average

average

average

STATISTICAL PROPERTIES OF THE PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTIONS

Bimodality  
High dispersion

Regular symmetry  
Low dispersion

Asymmetry  
kurtosis

Multimodality  
Asymmetry  
kurtosis  
High dispersion

16 moments needed

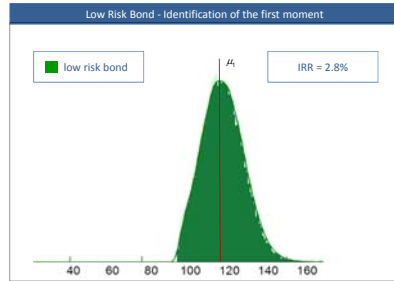
4 moments needed

12 moments needed

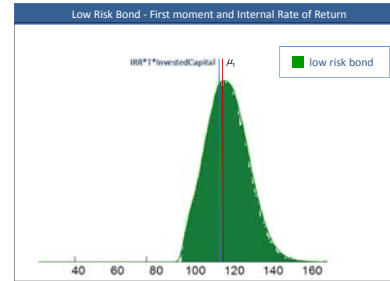
20 moments needed

From a pure statistical point of view, a proper reconstruction of the original distribution needs at least 4 moments even for the most regular one

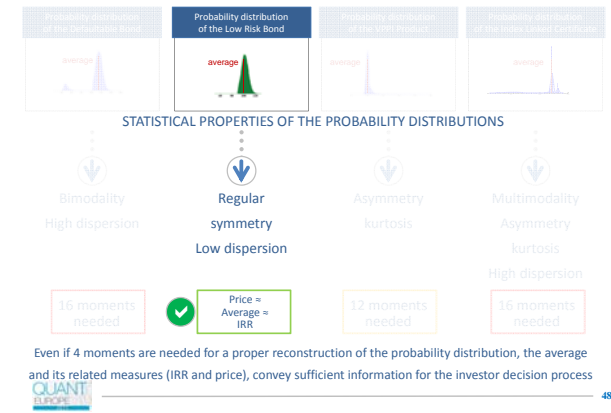




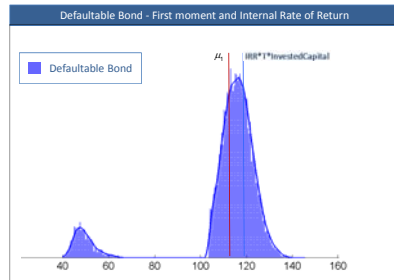
IRR  $\leftarrow \dots \rightarrow$  First moment of the probability distribution



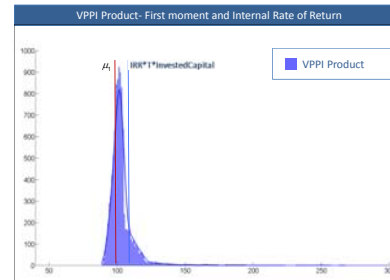
IRR = 2.8%  $\mu_1 = \text{IRR} * T * \text{InvestedCapital} = 114$  ✓



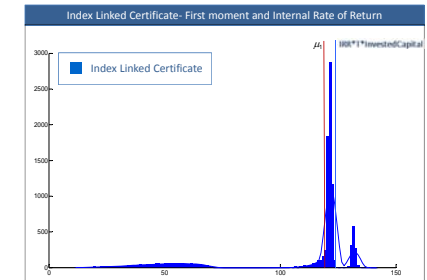
Even if 4 moments are needed for a proper reconstruction of the probability distribution, the average and its related measures (IRR and price), convey sufficient information for the investor decision process



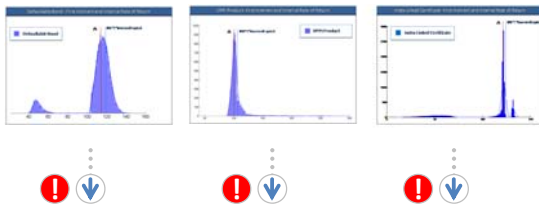
IRR = 3.85%  $\mu_1 \neq \text{IRR} * T * \text{InvestedCapital} = 119.25$  !



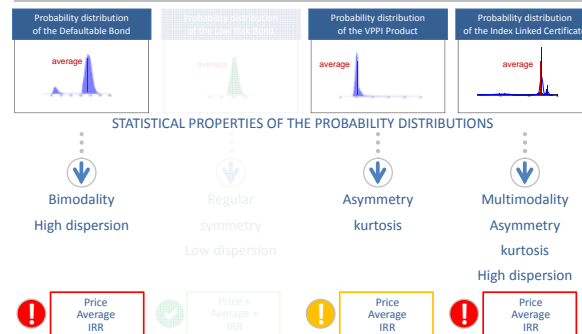
IRR = 2.53%  $\mu_1 \neq \text{IRR} * T * \text{InvestedCapital} = 112.65$  !



IRR = 5.91%  $\mu_1 \neq \text{IRR} * T * \text{InvestedCapital} = 129.55$  !



For more complex financial structures, the average progressively loses its connection with the internal rate of return of the investment, so reducing its usefulness as an effective tool for the decision process



The price and the corresponding average and IRR at expiry date – in presence of IRREGULAR distributions – need to be complemented with additional information related to the shape of the probability distribution

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## Recovering information to support the price: model risk

### ! COMPLEX PRODUCT

The additional information to be supplemented must

be easy to understand for the average investor

capture efficiently all the main statistical characteristics of the probability distribution of the product

## Recovering information to support the price: model risk

### ! COMPLEX PRODUCT

The additional information to be supplemented must

be easy to understand for the average investor

capture efficiently all the main statistical characteristics of the probability distribution of the product

**Proposal 1:** Convey to the average investor the entire probability distribution

## Recovering information to support the price: model risk



MODELLING CHOICES FOR THE SELECTED FINANCIAL PRODUCTS

2 Factor Short Interest Rate Hull-White Model  
Short Interest Rate Cox Ingersoll Ross Model

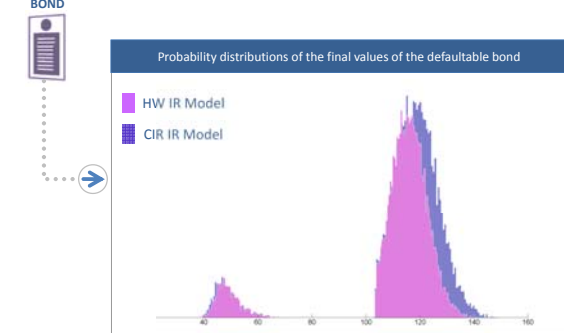
Heston Stochastic Volatility Model for the Equity component  
Barndorff Nielsen Normal Inverse Gaussian Model for the Equity component

Merton Jump Diffusion Model for the Equity component  
Variance Gamma Model for the Equity component

The shape of the probability distribution of the potential returns is obviously dependent on the modelling assumptions.

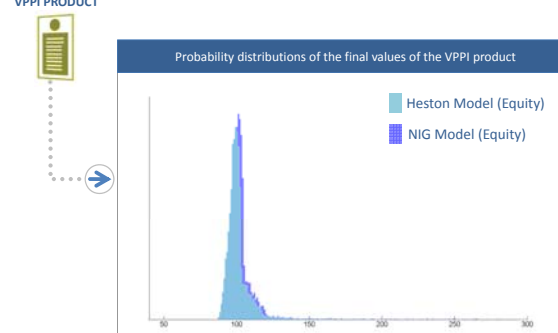
## Recovering information to support the price: model risk

### DEFAULTABLE BOND MODELLING CHOICES FOR THE SELECTED FINANCIAL PRODUCTS



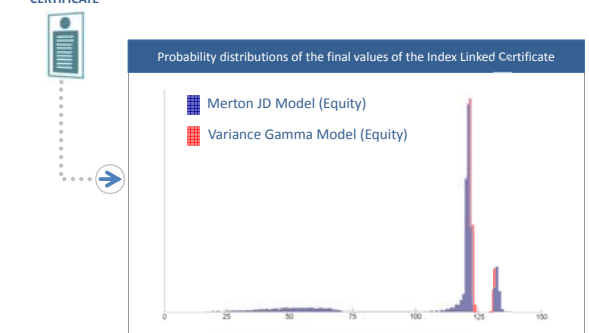
## Recovering information to support the price: model risk

### VPPI PRODUCT MODELLING CHOICES FOR THE SELECTED FINANCIAL PRODUCTS



## Recovering information to support the price: model risk

### INDEX LINKED CERTIFICATE MODELLING CHOICES FOR THE SELECTED FINANCIAL PRODUCTS



## Recovering information to support the price: model risk

### ! COMPLEX PRODUCT

The additional information to be supplemented must

be easy to understand for the average investor

capture efficiently all the main statistical characteristics of the probability distribution of the product

the probability distribution is an abstract object not easy to handle by the average investors

the shape of the probability distribution is dependent on the modelling assumptions

**Proposal 1:** Convey to the average investor the entire probability distribution

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## Recovering information to support the price: the unbundling table

### ! COMPLEX PRODUCT

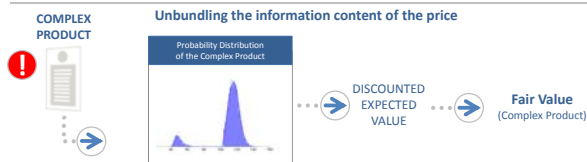
The additional information to be supplemented must

be easy to understand for the average investor

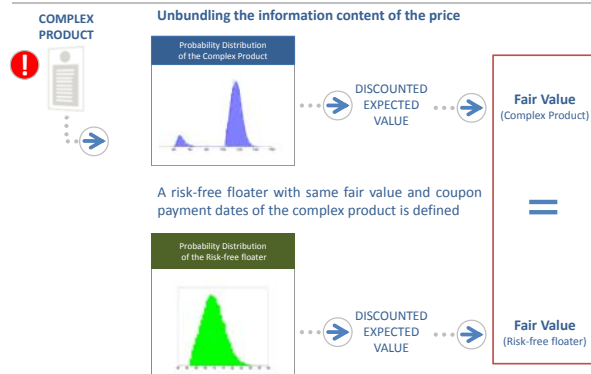
capture efficiently all the main statistical characteristics of the probability distribution of the product

**Proposal 2:** Unbundling the information content of the price

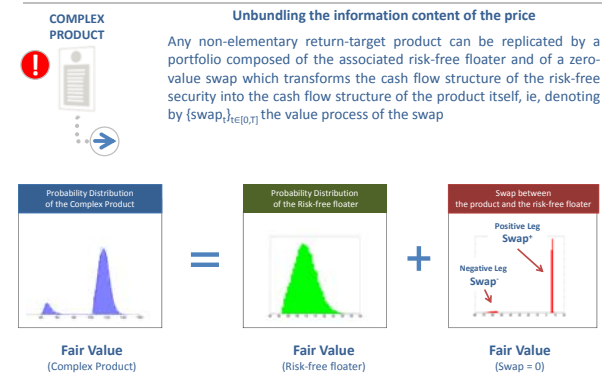
## Recovering information to support the price: the unbundling table



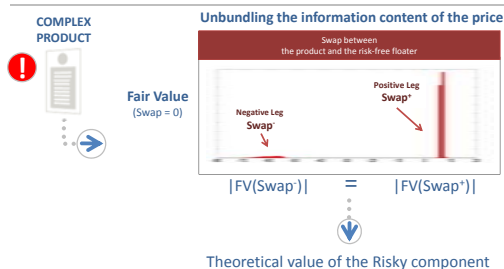
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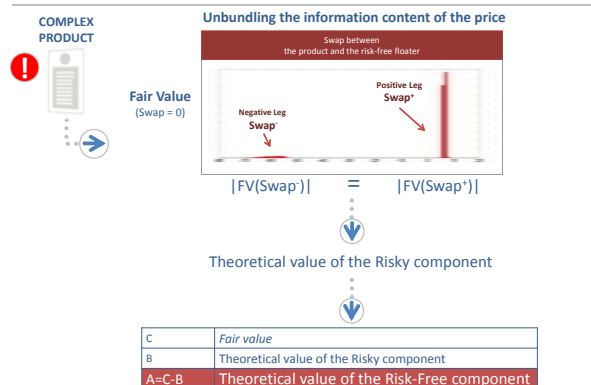
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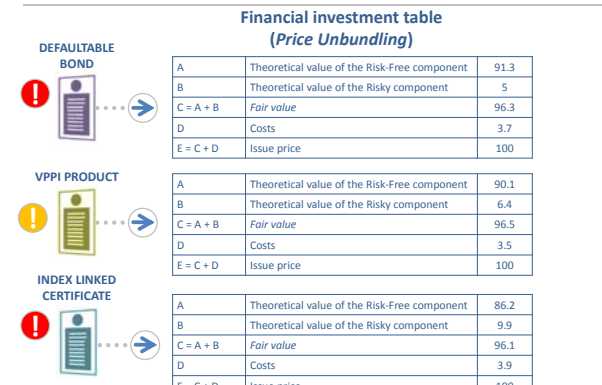
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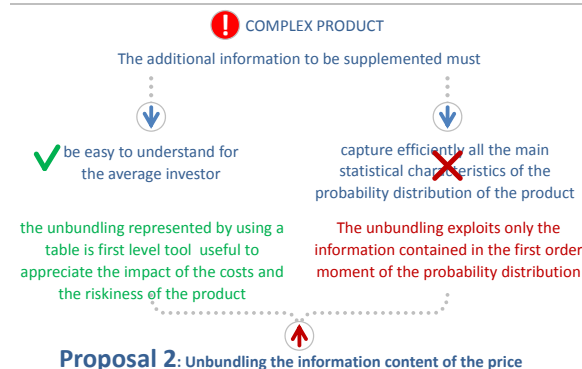
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## Recovering information to support the price: the unbundling table



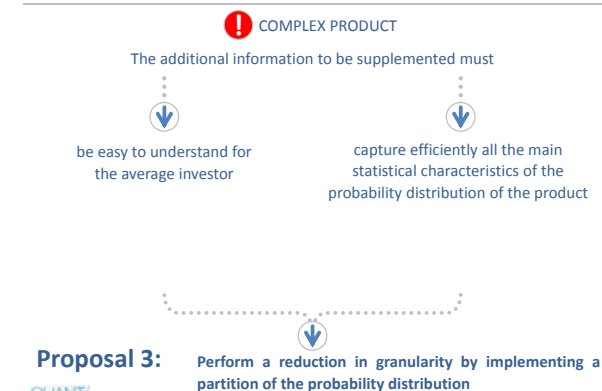
## Recovering information to support the price: the unbundling table



## Syllabus

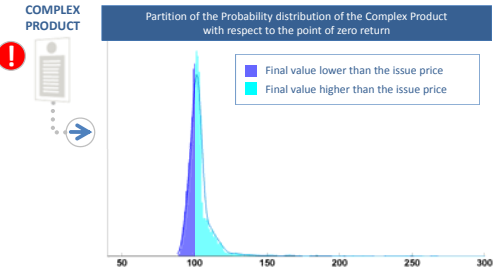
- Shapes and patterns of probability distributions for different financial products
- The significance of the price information as a mean of a risk-neutral probability distribution
- Significance Tests
- Recovering information to supplement the price
  - Proposal 1
  - Proposal 2
  - Proposal 3
- Conclusions

## Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



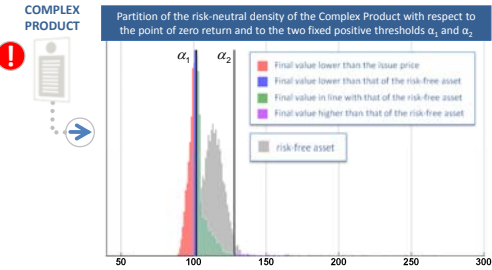


Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



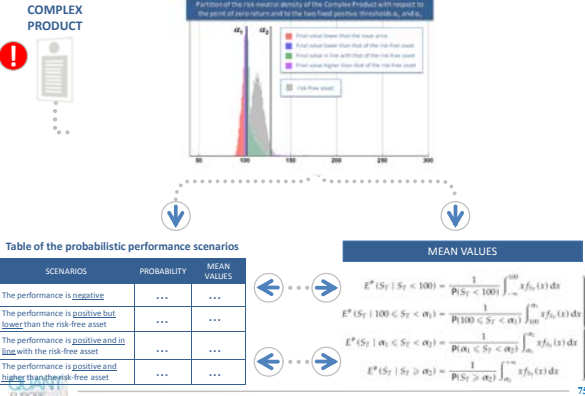
The assessment of the probability of recovering at least the amount paid for the product is of great significance for the investor.

Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



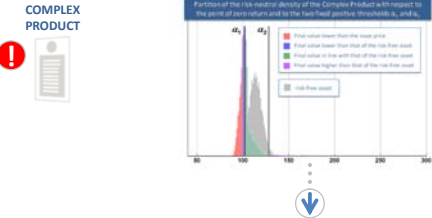
It is appropriate to explore further partitions of the macro-event “the final value of the investment is higher than the issue price” by performing a direct comparison with the final values of the risk-free asset.

Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



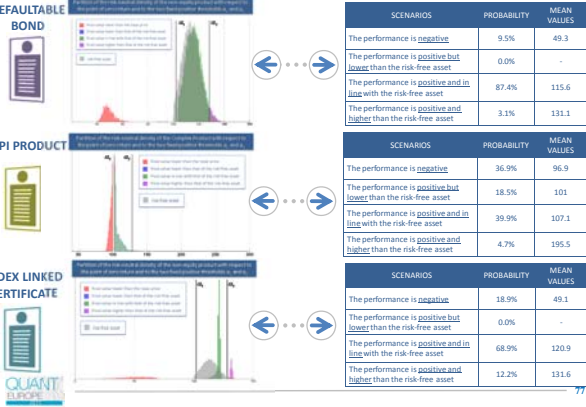
- Benefits of this solution:
- The reduction in granularity of the events determined by the partition involves only a very limited loss of information; The table, built by coupling for each scenario its risk-neutral probability and the associated mean value, is very easy to read;
  - The model risk arising from the different proprietary models of the issuers has a limited impact.

Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique

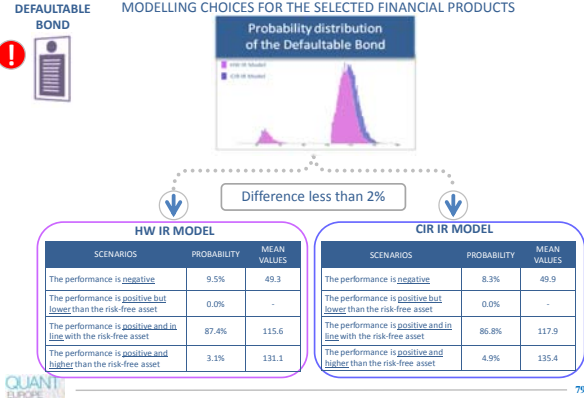


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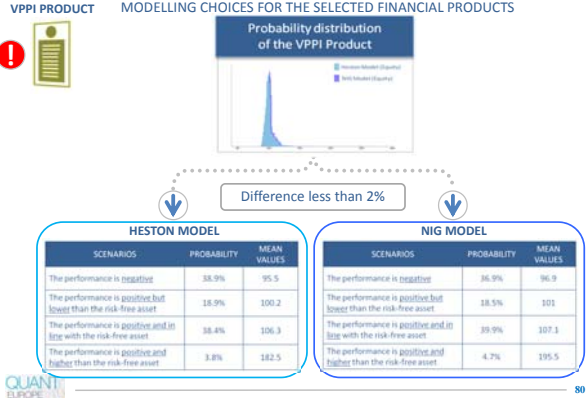
Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



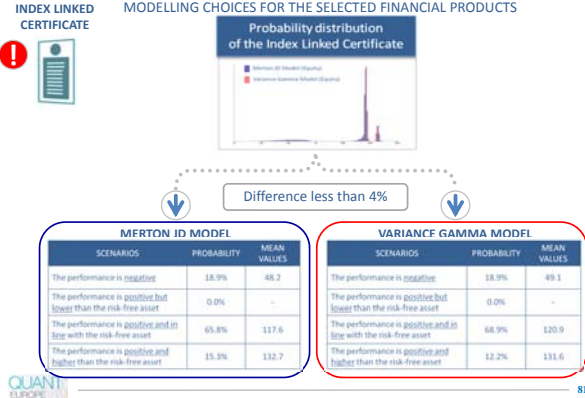
Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



Recovering information to support the price: the superimposition technique



COMPLEX PRODUCT

The additional information to be supplemented must

be easy to understand for the average investor

capture efficiently all the main statistical characteristics of the probability distribution of the product

the partition should be done by choosing events that have a strong financial meaning for the investor

the reduction in granularity mitigates in a significant way the model risk

Proposal 3:

Perform a reduction in granularity by implementing a partition of the probability distribution

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Syllabus

Shapes and patterns of probability distributions for different financial products

The significance of the price information as a mean of a risk-neutral probability distribution

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Proposal 1

Proposal 2

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Conclusions

Since there's a close one-to-one relationship between the two tables, the two sets of information can be easily coupled in an easy-to-read sheet

COMPLEX PRODUCT

Complex Product - simulated trajectories

Fair Price

Pricing at subscription time

t (years)

Pricing at Maturity

Potential Returns

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DEFAULTABLE BOND

Defaultable Bond - simulated trajectories

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VPPI PRODUCT

VPPI Product - simulated trajectories

Fair Price

Pricing at subscription time

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INDEX LINKED CERTIFICATE

Index linked Certificate - simulated trajectories

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