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2019 EU-wide transparency exercise: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a transparency exercise?

The transparency exercise is a mean through which the EBA disseminates bank-by-bank information on a wide sample of EU banks in a consistent and comparable way. Since its establishment in 2011, the EBA has promoted additional disclosure and transparency in the EU banking sector as a way to improve market discipline and restore confidence in EU banks. The 2019 EU-wide transparency exercise will enable all market participants to better understand and assess the EU banking system thanks to the detailed data on banks' capital positions, risk exposure amounts and asset quality.

2. How does it differ from a stress test?

Transparency exercises are purely disclosure exercises where only supervisory reporting data on a bank by bank level is published, and no shocks are applied (as it is the case for stress tests). Transparency exercises, just like stress tests, are conducted by the EBA on a regular basis at the EU-wide level and cover the largest EU banks at their highest level of consolidation. Both exercises aim at promoting market and supervisory discipline and providing transparency on banks' exposures, so as to address any uncertainties that may still remain.

3. How many banks are involved?

The 2019 EU-wide transparency exercise provides detailed bank-by-bank data for 131 banks from 27 countries of the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA).



4. Who will use this information?

The information disclosed is expected to be extensively used by banks, market analysts, academics and international organisations in their assessments of EU banks, which will result in better understanding of and confidence in the EU banking sector.

5. How is the transparency exercise related to the Risk Assessment Report (RAR)?

The EU-wide transparency exercise is published together with the Risk Assessment Report (RAR), which is based on a wider sample of banks. In the transparency exercise database, as well as in the interactive tools available on the EBA website, data is also disclosed for the bucket "All other banks", which includes the aggregated values for the remaining banks which are in the RAR sample but not in the transparency exercise. These banks report to the EBA at the highest level of consolidation and, therefore, their data contributes to the EU averages. The disclosure of figures for the rest of the sample allows users to reconcile the transparency data with the respective aggregated EU figures that are shown in the RAR.

6. What kind of data is disclosed and which are the main changes in comparison with previous exercises?

The disclosure templates are mostly in line with the ones used in the 2018 exercise. The most significant changes for this year's exercise derive from the disclosure of two additional quarters of data and the introduction of the Assets template. The templates for the 2019 exercise cover the following areas: capital, leverage ratio, risk exposure amounts, profit and losses, assets, market risk, credit risk, exposures to sovereign, non-performing exposures and forborne exposures. All the templates are entirely populated with supervisory reporting data.

7. How are capital increases, mergers and acquisitions or any restructuring action on banks' balance sheets treated in the 2019 EU-wide transparency exercise?

The transparency exercise includes supervisory reporting data as of September 2018, December 2018, March 2019 and June 2019. Therefore, any banks' actions having an impact on their balance sheets happened after these reference dates are not considered in the 2019 EU-wide transparency exercise. In case of major events, a footnote to the templates explains the impact of such events.



8. In which format is the data being released?

The EBA has developed a set of practical tools to help users navigate through the 2019 EU-wide transparency data. These include interactive maps and excel aggregation tools, as well as a complete dataset in CSV format, which can be imported into any analytical software for analysis purposes.

The transparency dataset itself is stored in four different CSV files and shows all the bank-by-bank data contained in the transparency templates. Each CSV file is related to a particular data category, reflecting the content of one or more transparency templates. The maps tool allows users visualizing and analysis data by country and by bank through maps.

9. What is the reference date of the transparency exercise data and of the risk assessment report?

The reference dates for the data of the transparency exercise are Q3 2018, Q4 2018, Q1 2019 and Q2 2019. The risk assessment report is based on data up to Q2 2019.

10. How often will the EBA release this data?

The EBA conducts transparency exercises on an annual basis as decided by the Board of Supervisors.