

ESMA updates its Q&As BMR

Following the publication in the Official Journal of the European Union of Regulation (EU) 2019/2089 as regards EU Climate Transition Benchmarks, EU Paris-aligned Benchmarks and sustainability-related disclosures for benchmarks, the modified Q&A provide clarification on the transitional provisions applicable to third country benchmarks.

The purpose of this document is to promote common supervisory approaches and practices in the application of the BMR. It provides responses to questions posed by the public, market participants and competent authorities in relation to the practical application of the BMR. The content of this document is aimed at competent authorities under the Regulation to ensure that in their supervisory activities their actions are converging along the lines of the responses adopted by ESMA. It also provides guidance to market participants by providing clarity on the BMR requirements.

Article – Quiz: how much do you know about human rights in the EU?



As an EU citizen, you enjoy many rights. The EU strives to protect human rights in Europe as well as beyond. In addition, the European Parliament raises awareness by holding debates, adopting resolutions and it recognises the efforts of human rights defenders with an annual prize.

Do you know what the EU does to support human rights? Take our quiz!

[ESMA amends CRR standard on main indices and recognised exchanges](#)

ESMA introduced these amendments to ensure the most relevant criteria are applied to specify the main indices, and that the list of recognised exchanges is updated to reflect legislative changes and changes in market structures.

The amended ITS provides for a new methodology to ensure that the main indices captured comprise instruments that are sufficiently liquid, and therefore can serve as adequate eligible collateral.

In addition, ESMA's amendment will provide credit institutions and investment firms with the option to use, as eligible collateral, instruments traded on new European exchanges, as well as instruments traded on third-country exchanges, from those jurisdictions for which the European Commission (EC) has adopted equivalence decisions under Article 25(4) of MiFID II as now required under CRR II.

Due to the uncertainty about the date when the United Kingdom (UK) will leave the European Union, ESMA included two versions of the amended ITS in the Final Report. The first version includes UK exchanges and is to be used in case there is a *Brexit deal*. The second version of the ITS excludes UK exchanges and should be used in case of a *no-deal* outcome and in the absence of a Commission Equivalence decision in respect of the UK.

Next steps

ESMA has submitted the final report, including the draft ITS amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/1646 to the EC which now has three months to decide whether to endorse the proposed amendments

Bulgaria: EIB supports expansion of more environmentally friendly production of lead and zinc under the Investment Plan for Europe



- EUR 65m loan to KCM AD to increase the company's production by 25%
- Construction of a new lead refining plant and a zinc electrolysis unit, replacing outdated facilities
- Better environmental performance, increased recycling rates of waste materials, and improved working conditions

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has agreed to provide a EUR 65m loan to KCM AD, a Bulgarian producer of lead and zinc, to raise its production output by 25%. At the same time, the company's use of recycled materials will increase significantly, resulting in a more efficient and sustainable production process. KCM's zinc is used in galvanised steel products, the production of die-cast alloys and of brass and bronze products, while its lead is primarily directed towards the automotive and industrial battery sectors. The company employs more than 1 500 people.

The agreement is backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), the heart of the Investment Plan for Europe, also known as the Juncker Plan. Thanks to its guarantee, the EIB is in a position to support a patent-holding company in a cohesion region in an effort to render its production more sustainable.

“European support can do a lot to push heavy industry to sustainable levels,” said **EIB Vice-President Lilyana Pavlova** and continued: *“Backed by the Investment Plan for Europe, our loan will help KCM AD to make better use of natural resources and decrease the energy intensity of its production cycle. Both measures will make the company more competitive, and will secure more than 1 500 jobs in one of Europe’s cohesion regions. This shows that circular economy and climate action go hand in hand with the ambitious social and employment targets of the European Union.”*

European Commissioner for the Economy Paolo Gentiloni added: *“Making our traditional industries more eco-friendly and modern is key to boosting energy efficiency. With EUR 65m in EIB financing under the Investment Plan for Europe, KCM can upgrade and update its manufacturing processes. This investment will help to support more than 1 500 jobs in the region.”*

CEO and Chairman of the Board of Directors of KCM 2000 AD Rumen Tsonev stated: *“The EIB support would help KCM enter the next investment period with confidence, securing their market position as a leading European company in the recycling of non-ferrous metals, which are in great demand. It will therefore also contribute to more sustainable development goals.”*

KCM AD will use the EIB loan for its technological upgrade programme for 2020-2023. The programme provides for the modernisation and expansion of the company’s lead and precious metals refining unit and zinc electrolysis unit. The project will increase the recycling capacity for different types of secondary waste lead and zinc materials by 15 percentage points. Secondary materials currently make up some 20% of the total refined lead and zinc output, while the project will bring the share of secondary materials to about 35%. This is high by EU-standards: other European primary smelters report a recycling share of only 10% to 15%.

KCM AD, owned by the [KCM 2000 Group](#), is a Bulgarian medium-sized smelter of lead and zinc accounting for about 1% of global output and 3% to 4% of European output. It is the only smelter in Central and Southeast Europe, with its closest competitors in Poland and Italy. The positioning makes it a strong regional player with a significant market share in its main markets in Eastern Europe and Turkey, with extensive knowledge and with long-standing relationships with each customer.

European Cooperation: workshop on back and front office tools

December 11, 2019 [General](#)

European Cooperation: workshop on back and front office tools



From 9 to 11 December, a back office and front office workshop takes place at EUIPO in the framework of its European Cooperation activity.

The back office and front office systems are currently implemented in the national and regional IP offices of more than 20 EU Member States, giving users **a full set of harmonised software tools to manage the full lifecycle of trade marks and designs.**

The systems, developed under [European Cooperation](#) at EUIPO, fully support the transposition of the requirements of the Trade Mark Directive and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) among other functionalities.

Agenda topics include an overview of the development process of the Software Package tools and the preliminary outline of the Strategic Plan 2025 in terms of the European Cooperation Projects.

The workshop also includes round table sessions during which representatives of national and regional IP offices will be able to share their experience with the implementation of back and front office tools.