Risk Assessment Questionnaire – Summary of Results Spring 2021

EUROPEAN BANKING AUTHORITY

EBA



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Introduction

The EBA conducts semi-annual Risk Assessment Questionnaires (RAQs) among banks and market analysts. This booklet presents a summary of the responses to the RAQs carried out in spring 2021, in which 59 banks¹ and 10 market analysts submitted their answers. Results of the survey were received in April 2021. The RAQ results are published together with the EBA's quarterly Risk Dashboard (Q1 2021).

The results of the survey are presented in an aggregated form. The questionnaires, for both banks and analysts, can be found in the Appendices. The charts are numbered, with numbers corresponding to the questions in the distributed questionnaires. Answers to the same questions from former questionnaires may be presented where deemed relevant. For questions for which only one answer was permitted, any potential difference between the sum of shown responses and 100% is due to respondents answering either "n/a" or "no opinion". In the summary of the main results, most figures are rounded.

Should you wish to provide your feedback and/or comments on this booklet, please do not hesitate to do so by contacting <u>rast@eba.europa.eu</u>

¹ Please see Annex for the list of banks participating in the survey



Summary of the main results

The continued uncertainty around the evolution of COVID-19 and its impact on European banks is also reflected in responses to this survey. Also, responses submitted in the previous surveys may have been overly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore, historical comparison should be interpreted with great caution.

Business model, strategy, and profitability

- Most banks suggest they are considering, or have considered, mergers and acquisitions (M&A) (around 60%), which is slightly higher than in previous surveys. Banks primarily consider transactions involving domestic business units and/or portfolios (around 70%) and domestic credit institutions (around 60%). (Question 1 for banks)
- More than 40% of the banks estimate their cost of equity between 8% and 10%, and another 30% at 10%-12%. Whereas the share of the former bucket continued its declining trend (nearly 60% one year ago and 50% in autumn 2020), the share of the latter bucket further increased (nearly 20% one year ago). Despite the higher percentage, compared to previous surveys, expecting an improvement of their profitability (more than 70%), most of the banks reported that their current earnings do not cover their cost of equity (around 60%). Analysts are similarly optimistic on the profitability outlook as they expect banks' short-term earnings to improve (around 80% agree or somewhat agree), mainly driven by an increase in total revenues and overall cost efficiency improvements, as well as no further increase in provisions. (Question 3, 4 and 5 for banks and Question 1 for market analysts)
- Banks target reductions in operating expenses and increasing net fees and commissions to improve their profitability. Around 75% of the banks consider the reduction in operating expenses or general cost reductions as medium to high priority. An even higher percentage (more than 80%) targets an increase of their revenue side through commissions and fees. In line with previous surveys, automatisation and digitalisation are identified as the main areas to achieve a reduction in operating costs (around 95%), followed by overhead and staff reduction (around 80%) and reducing business activities (around 45%). (Questions 6 and 7 for banks)

Funding and liquidity

 In the next 12 months banks intend to focus their funding mainly on senior non-preferred/ senior HoldCo (nearly 50%) and preferred senior unsecured debt (more than 40%). A further rising share of banks reported their intention to draw funding from central banks (up to more than 20% from 15% in autumn last year, and 0% in autumn the year before). Analysts similarly expect banks to increase their senior non-preferred/senior HoldCo funding (50%), and equally central bank funding as well as senior unsecured funding (both 40%). (Question 9 for banks and Question 5 for market analysts)



- A smaller percentage of banks, compared to previous surveys, identifies the pricing as the main constraint when issuing MREL eligible instruments (down from more than 50% to close to 40%). Yet, an increasing percentage of banks suggest there are no constraints in that respect (around 40%). (*Question 10 for banks*)
- The percentage of banks charging negative rates on households' deposits remains rather low (close to 15%), compared to those banks charging negative interest rates to NFCs (around 55%). However, an increasing share of banks report that they charge higher fees for household and NFCs deposits or current accounts and related services, as reaction to the current low/negative interest rate environment. (*Question 11 for banks*)

Asset volume trends and asset quality

- A comparatively high share of banks expects rather a deterioration in the asset quality of most portfolios. More than 70% of the banks expect the asset quality of SME loans to deteriorate, followed by consumer credit (around 65%) and CRE exposures (around 55%). However, it also needs to be added that the expectation on asset quality slightly improved for the first time since spring 2019. The share of banks expecting a deterioration of asset quality declined slightly for all portfolios (except or the "other" portfolio). Similarly, the share of banks expecting an improvement of asset quality slightly rose for nearly all portfolios for the first time since spring 2019, but of course with still very low base of banks expecting improvements. (*Question 14 for banks*)
- Despite the gloomy outlook on the asset quality, a rising share of banks report that they plan to increase their exposures towards SMEs and residential mortgages (both around 65%) as well as corporate exposures (around 60%) and consumer credit (around 50%). (*Question 13 for* banks)
- Close to 80% of the banks indicate that their cost of risk (CoR) for the current financial year will not exceed 100bps. At the same time, the share of banks that expect their CoR to exceed 100bps, has fallen compared to the previous survey (to around 20% from 40% in autumn 2020). In addition, the COVID-19 overlay on the cost of risk applied by around 80% of the banks does not exceed 50% of the total CoR. (Question 15 and 16 for banks)

Conduct, reputation, and operational risk

• Close to 60% of the banks see an increase in operational risk, which is similar to previous surveys. Also, in line with their previous responses, banks consider cyber risk and data security issues as the main source for increasing operational risk (close to 90%), followed by conduct and legal risk (around 45%). Banks also indicate that they plan to increase IT infrastructure and systems investments because of the Covid-19 pandemic (nearly 70%). This comes in parallel to nearly 90% of banks planning more telework arrangements. (Question 20 and 21 for banks)

Fintech

• Banks continue considering FinTech firms more as a threat than an opportunity in the area of payments and retail brokerage. Specifically, more than 50% of EU banks consider Fintech firms



as threat to decrease revenues in payments and settlement as well as in retail brokerage (around 40%). The area of retail banking seems to bring both opportunities and threats (close to 45%) from the involvement of FinTech firms while opportunities seem to prevail in the areas of commercial banking and trading and sales (around 40%). (*Question 23 for banks*)

- Approximately 1 out of 4 banks have encountered regulatory or supervisory impediments in seeking to use a digital platform while more than 95% of respondent banks are currently using digital platforms to market or conclude contracts for financial products or services with customers. (*Question 24 and 25 for banks*)
- Around 75% of EU banks use a RegTech solution. The most frequent RegTech solutions relate to AML/CFT identification and verification (70%), transaction monitoring (65%) and fraud detection (55%). The main challenges that banks face in developing and implementing RegTech solutions relate mainly to internal factors more than half of EU banks experience issues with integration with legacy systems and data quality. Organisational mindset, internal culture and data privacy and protection issues are also significant barriers for RegTech adoption. (*Question 26 for banks*)

Sustainable Finance

• Around 85% of banks are planning to develop products related to green or energy efficient mortgages, followed by green corporate loans (nearly 80%), which compare respectively to 85% and 70%, in the previous survey. However, the biggest rise is related to the share of banks that report their interest to develop green cards, like debit or credit cards linked to environmental activities (around 50%, up from below 20% in autumn last year). In addition, related to the liability side, around 45% of banks have seen a pricing benefit compared to comparable non green bonds. (*Question 27 and 29 for banks*)

General open question

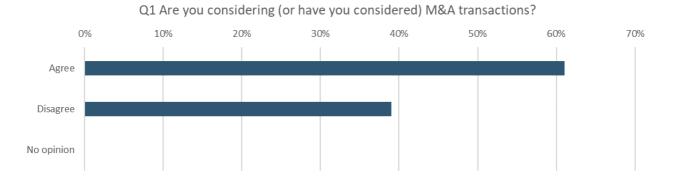
• In the open question on risks looking ahead, **banks and analysts highlight the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Overall, respondents are mainly concerned about the increased uncertainty and the possible slowdown of economic activity**. In addition, banks are particularly concerned on the impact of COVID-19 on asset quality and the phasing out of support measures. Other factors mentioned by banks were credit risk, the low interest rate environment, regulatory risk, political risk, cyber risks and increasing risks related to sovereign debt sustainability. (*Question 32 for banks*)

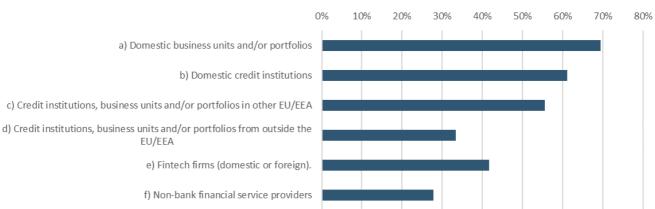


Banks' questionnaire

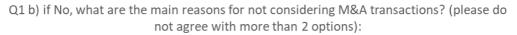
1. Business model / strategy / profitability

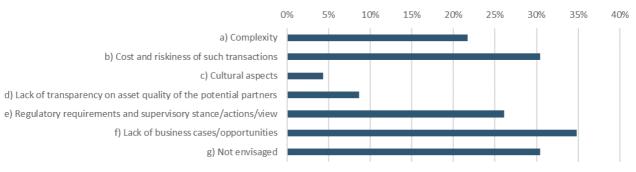
Question 1: Spring 2021 results





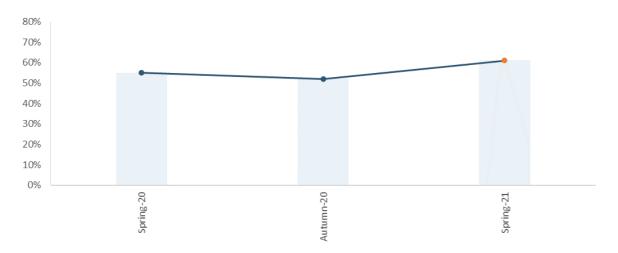
Q1 a) if Yes, are you potentially considering M&A transactions with/of:







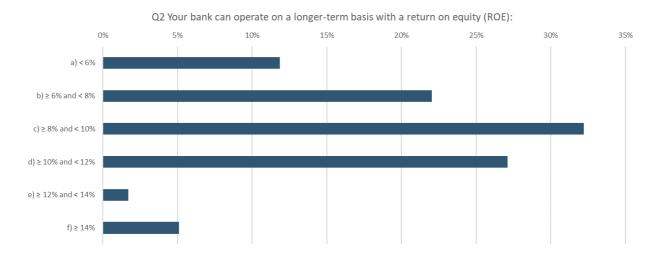
Question 1: Comparison with earlier results



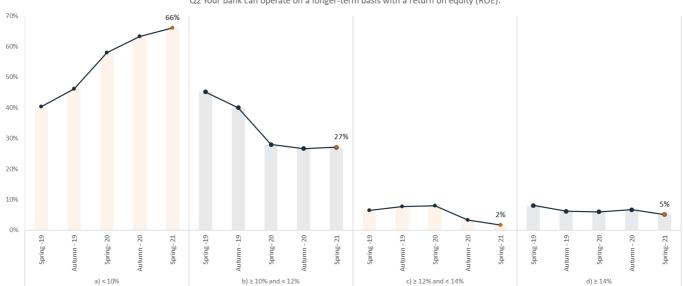
Q1.1 Are you considering (or have you considered) M&A transactions?



Question 2: Spring 2021 results



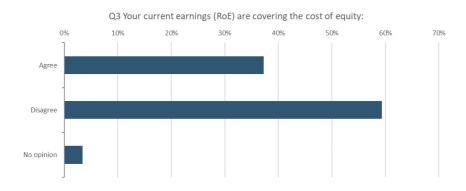
Question 2: Comparison with earlier results



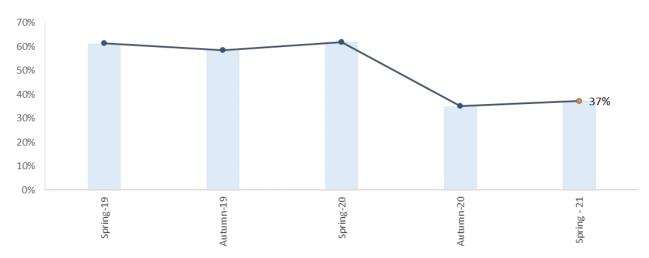
Q2 Your bank can operate on a longer-term basis with a return on equity (ROE):



Question 3: Spring 2021 results



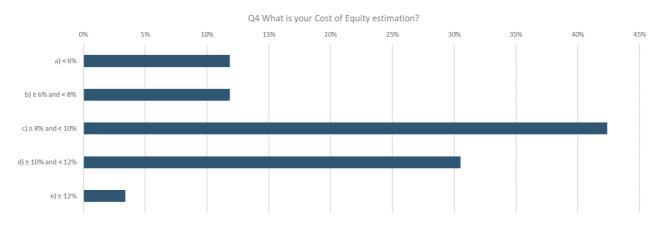
Question 3: Comparison with earlier results



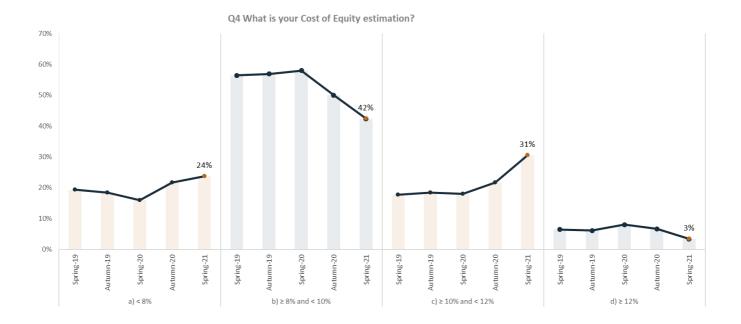
Q3 Your current earnings (RoE) are covering the cost of equity:



Question 4: Spring 2021 results

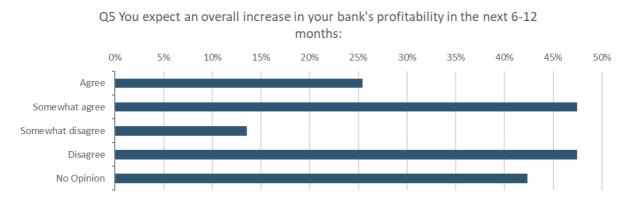


Question 4: Comparison with earlier results

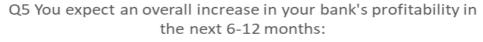


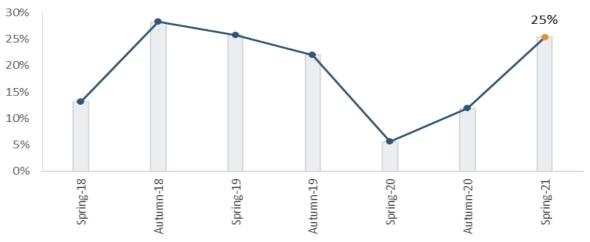


Question 5: Spring 2021 results



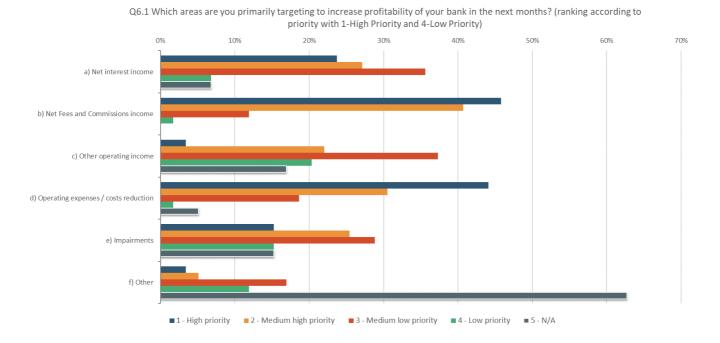
Question 5: Comparison with earlier results



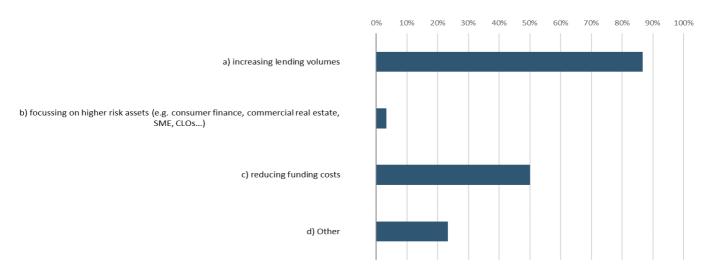




Question 6: Spring 2021 results



Q6.2 If you rank net interest income with (1) or (2), what are the main area to increase net interest income: (please do not agree with more than 2 options)



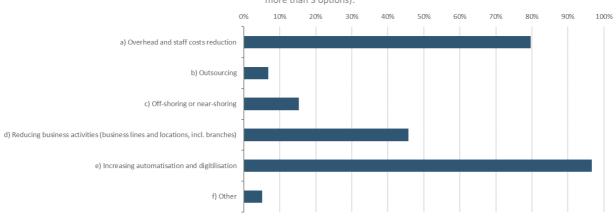


Question 6: comparison with earlier results



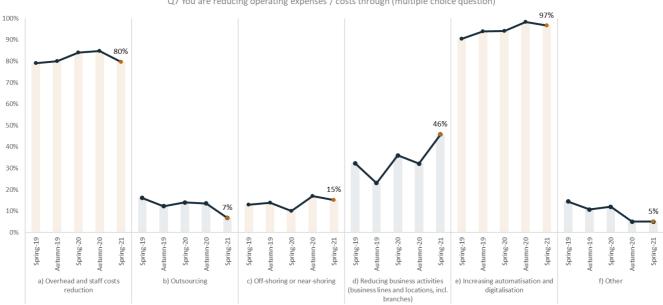


Question 7: Spring 2021 results



Q7 Which measures are you primarily taking to reduce operating expenses / costs through? (please do not agree with more than 3 options):

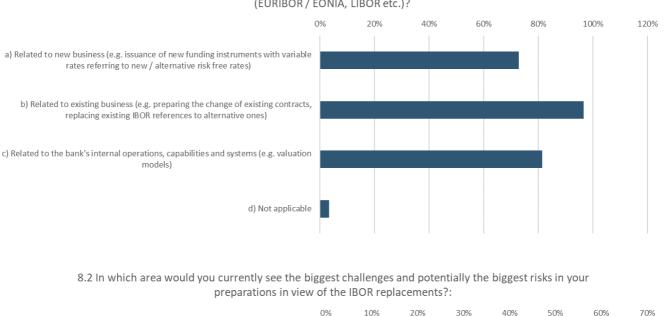
Question 7: comparison with earlier results

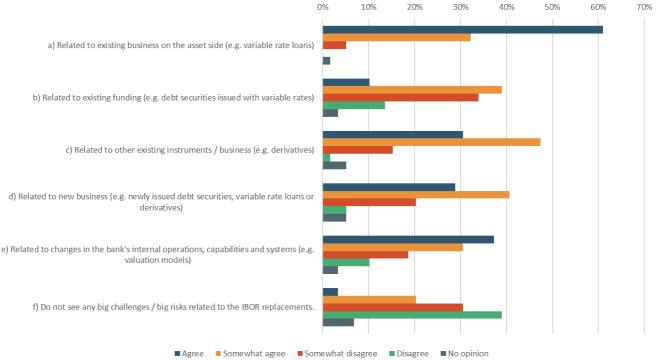


Q7 You are reducing operating expenses / costs through (multiple choice question)



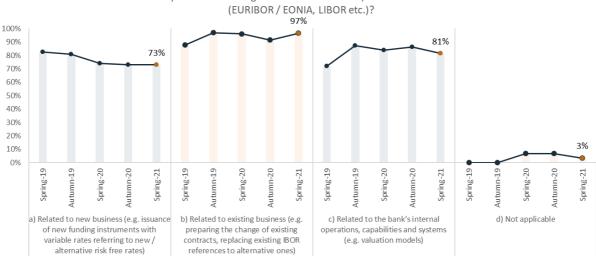
Question 8: Spring 2021 results





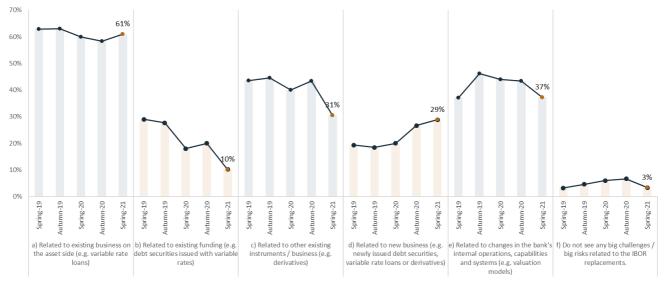


Question 8: comparison with earlier results



8.1 In which areas is your bank working on solutions for the replacement of IBOR benchmark rates

8.2 In which area would you currently see the biggest challenges and potentially the biggest risks in your preparations in view of the IBOR replacements?:

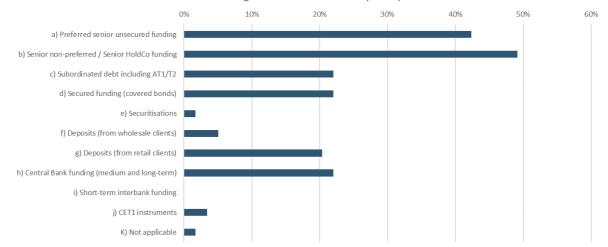




2. Funding / liquidity

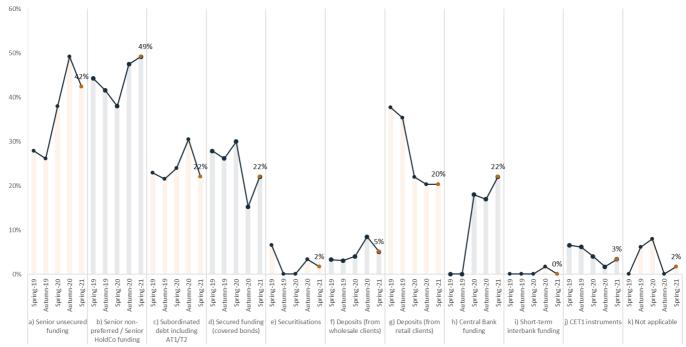
Question 9: Spring 2021 results

Q9 In the next 12 months, which funding instruments do you intend to focus on? (please do not agree with more than 2 options)



Question 9: comparison with earlier results

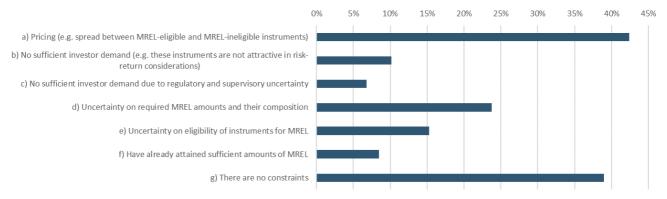
Q9 In the next 12 months, which funding instruments do you intend to focus on? (please do not agree with more than 2 options)





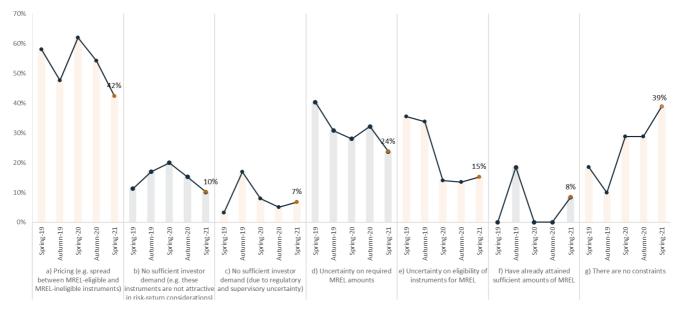
Question 10: Spring 2021 results

Q10 Which are the main constraints to issue instruments eligible for MREL (please do not agree with more than 2 options)?



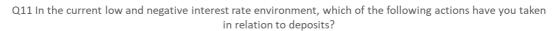
Question 10: comparison with earlier results

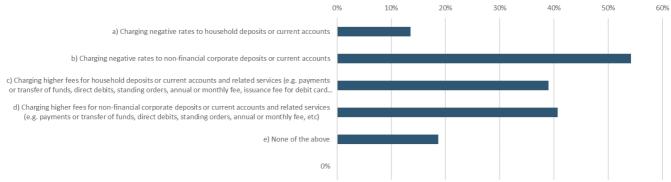




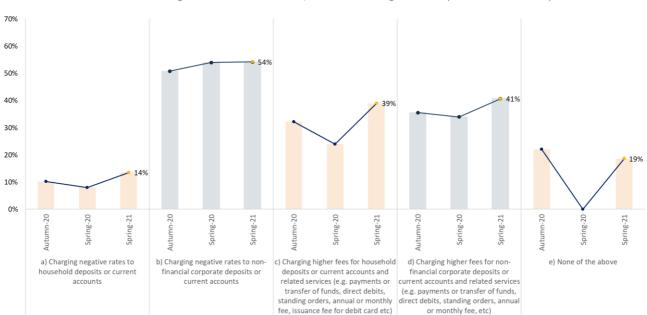


Question 11: Spring 2021 results





Question 11: comparison with earlier results



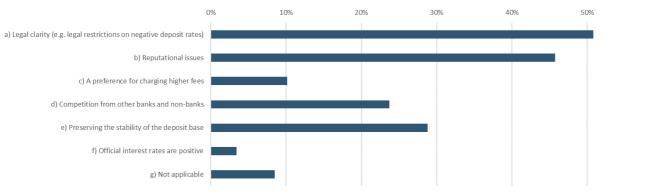
Q11 In the current low and negative interest rate environment, which of the following actions have you taken in relation to deposits?



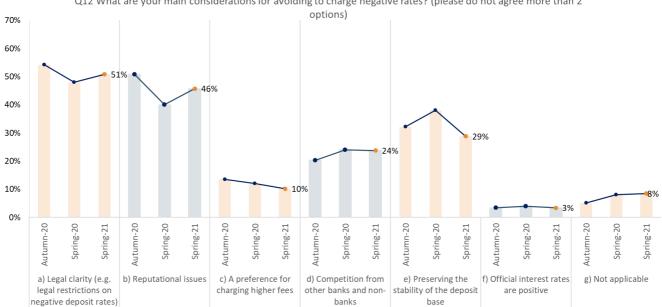
60%

Question 12: Spring 2021 results





Question 12: comparison with earlier results



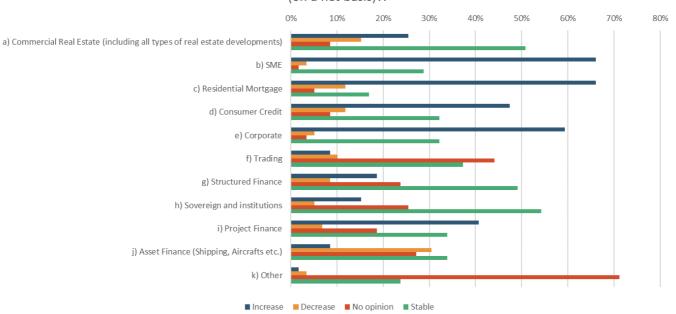
Q12 What are your main considerations for avoiding to charge negative rates? (please do not agree more than 2



3. Asset composition & quality

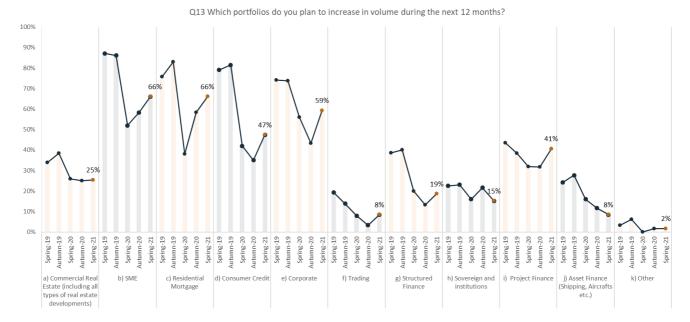
Question 13: Spring 2021 results

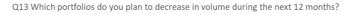
Q13 Which portfolios do you plan to increase/decrease in volume during the next 12 months (on a net basis)?:

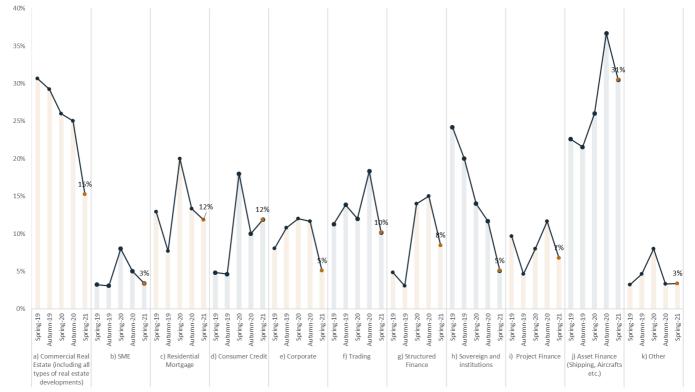




Question 13: Comparison with earlier results

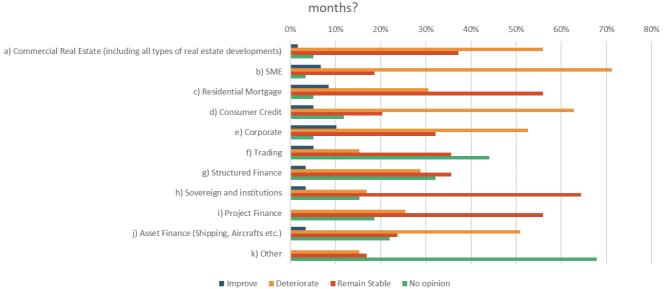








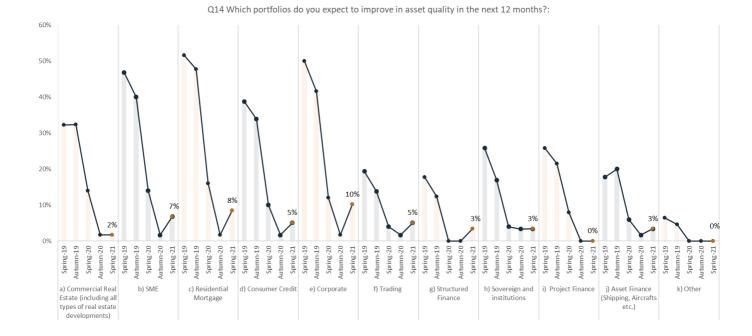
Question 14: Spring 2021 results



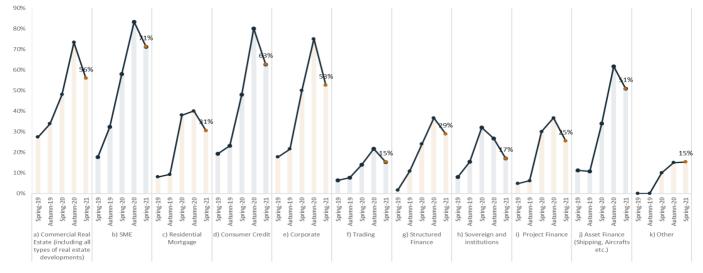
Q14 Which portfolios do you expect to improve/deteriorate in asset quality in the next 12



Question 14: comparison with earlier results

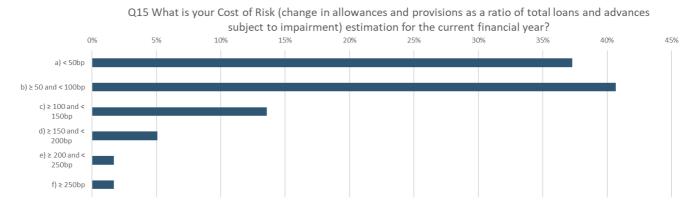


Q14 Which portfolios do you expect to deteriorate in asset quality in the next 12 months?:



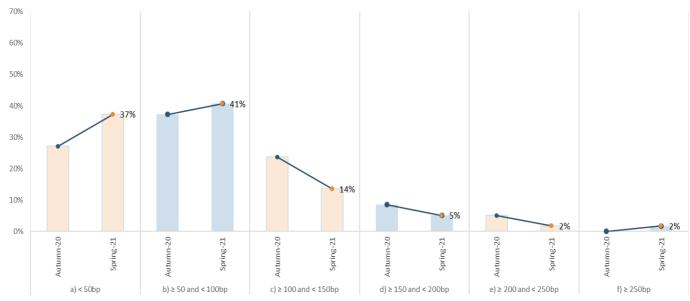


Question 15: Spring 2021 results



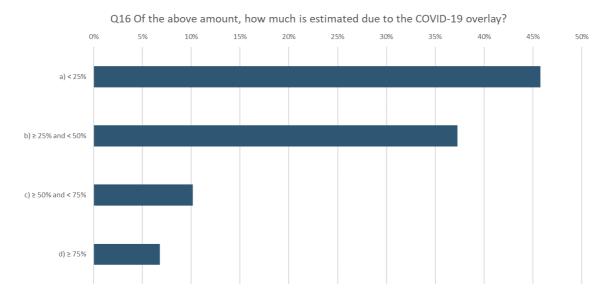
Question 15: comparison with earlier results





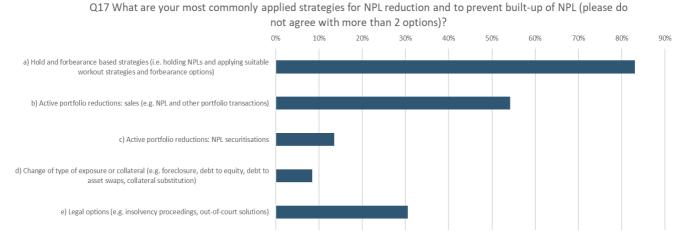


Question 16: Spring 2021 results

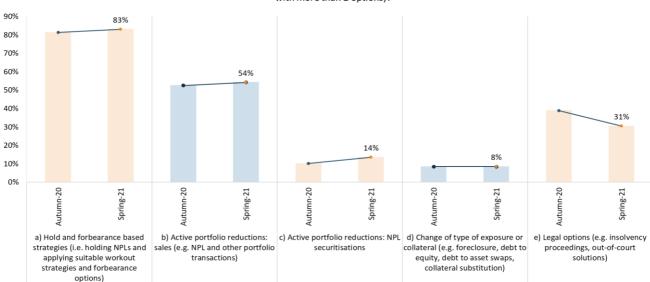




Question 17: Spring 2021 results



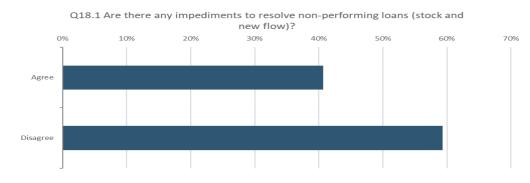
Question 17: comparison with earlier results



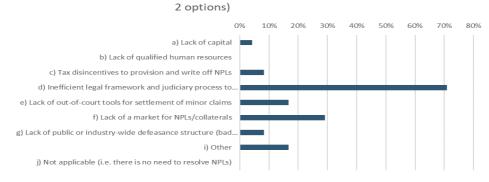
Q17 What are your most commonly applied strategies for NPL reduction and to prevent built-up of NPL (please do not agree with more than 2 options)?



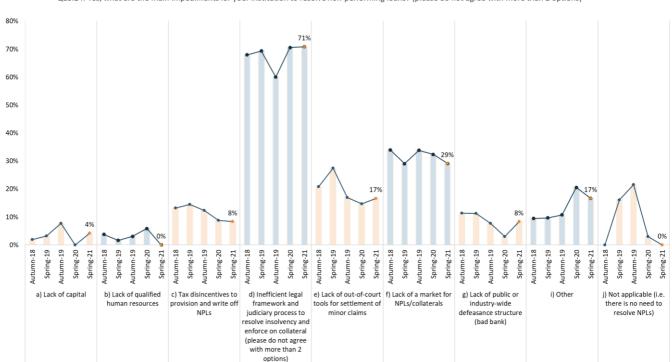
Question 18: Spring 2021 results



Q18.2 If Yes, what are the main impediments for your institution to resolve non-performing loans? (please do not agree with more than



Question 18: comparison with earlier results

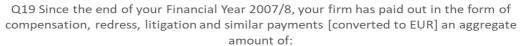


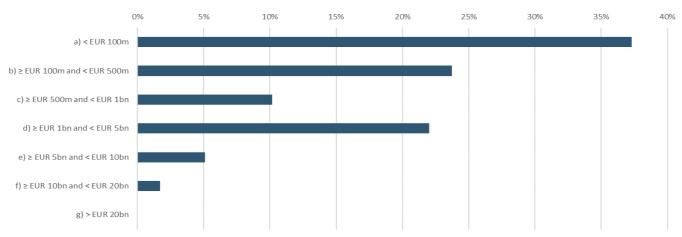
Q18.2 If Yes, what are the main impediments for your institution to resolve non-performing loans? (please do not agree with more than 2 options)



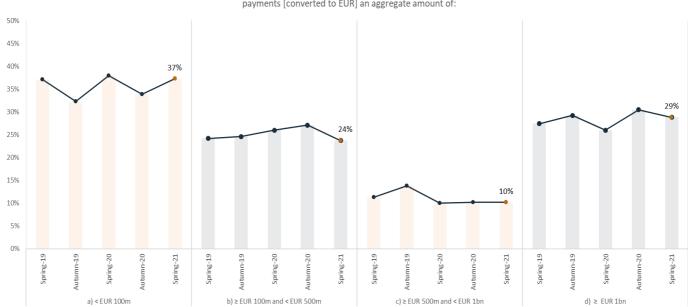
4. Conduct, reputation, and operational risk

Question 19: Spring 2021 results





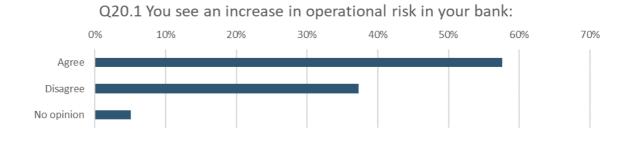
Question 19: comparison with earlier results



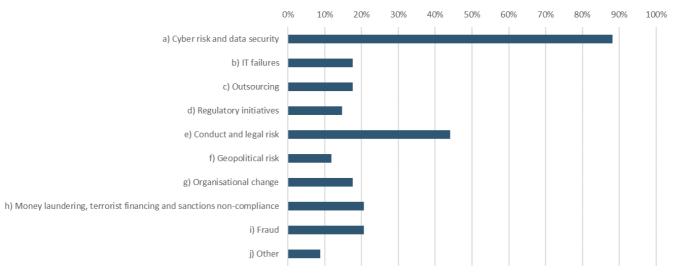
Q19 Since the end of your Financial Year 2007/8, your firm has paid out in the form of compensation, redress, litigation and similar payments [converted to EUR] an aggregate amount of:



Question 20: Spring 2021 results

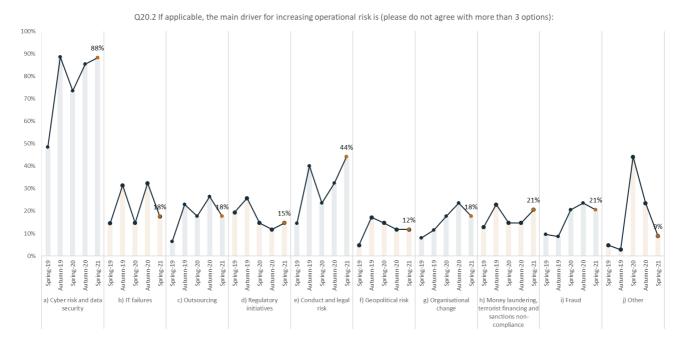


Q20.2 If applicable, the main driver for increasing operational risk is (please do not agree with more than 3 options):

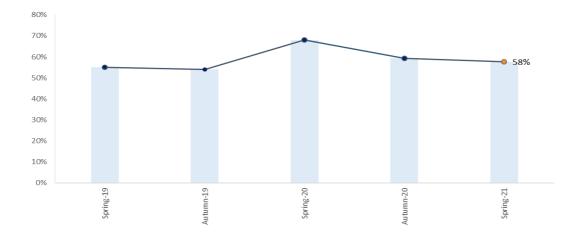




Question 20: comparison with earlier results

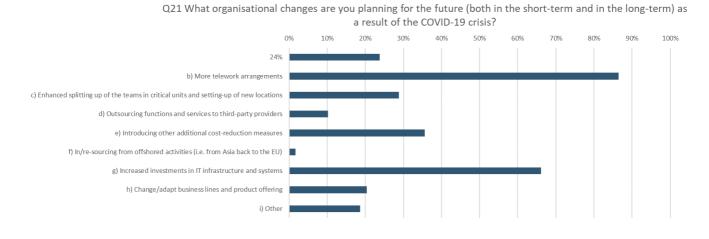


Q20.1 You see an increase in operational risk in your bank:

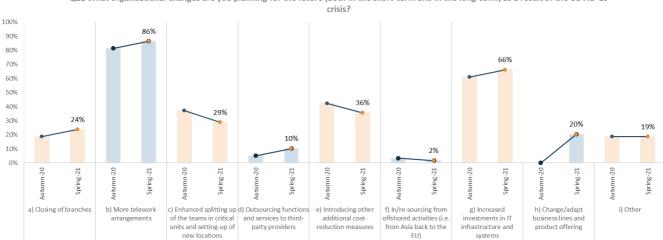




Question 21: Spring 2021 results



Question 21: comparison with earlier results

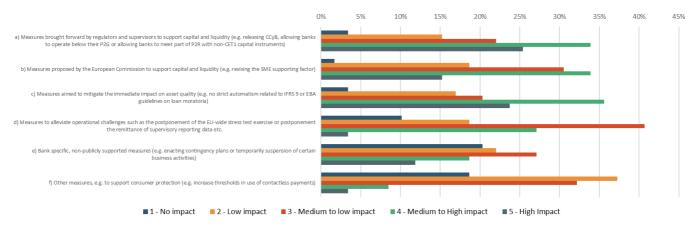


Q21 What organisational changes are you planning for the future (both in the short-term and in the long-term) as a result of the COVID-19



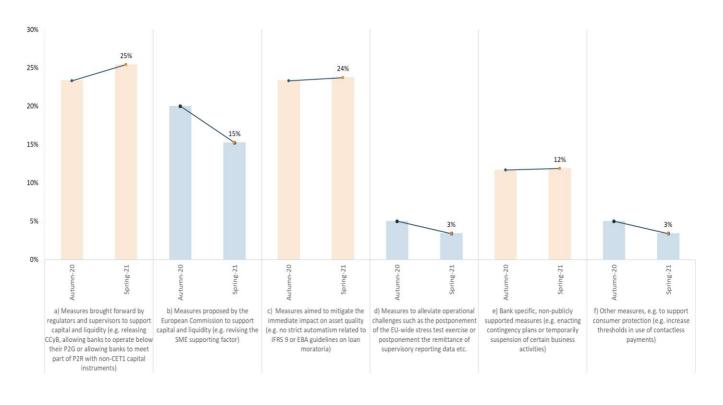
Question 22: Spring 2021 results

Q22 Please rate the measures according to their efficiency to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in your opinion? (1 no impact to 5 high impact)



Question 22: comparison with earlier results

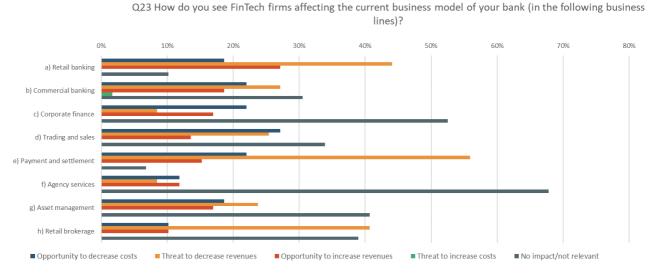
Q22 Please rate the measures according to their efficiency to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in your opinion? (1 no impact to 5 high impact)





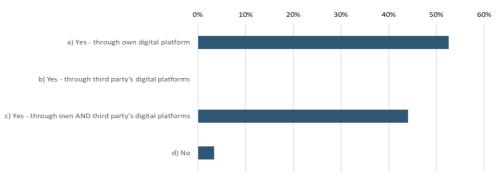
5. FinTech

Question 23: Spring 2021 results

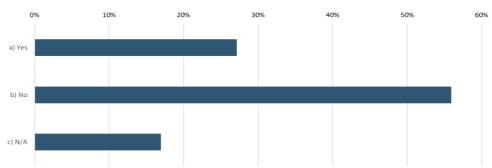


Question 24: Spring 2021 results



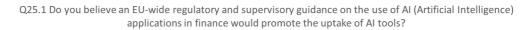


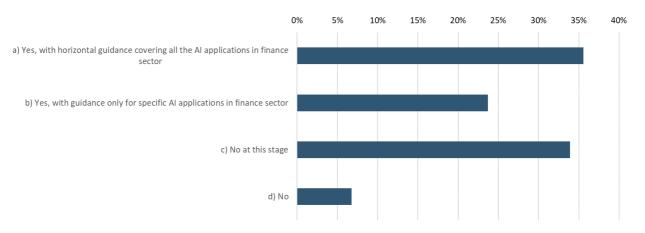
Q24.3 Have you encountered any regulatory or supervisory impediments in seeking to use a digital platform to market or conclude with customers contracts for products and services?



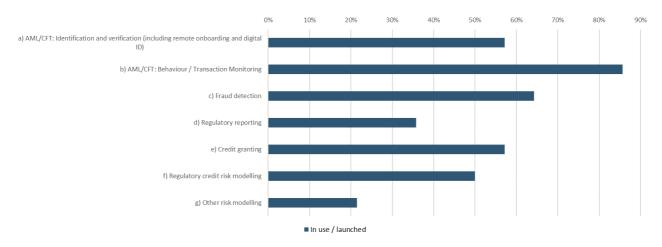


Question 25: Spring 2021 results





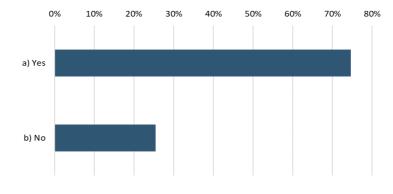
Q25.2 If (b), please indicate below the AI applications in finance where EU-wide regulatory and supervisory guidance would be needed.



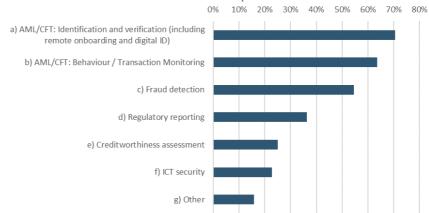


Question 26: Spring 2021 results

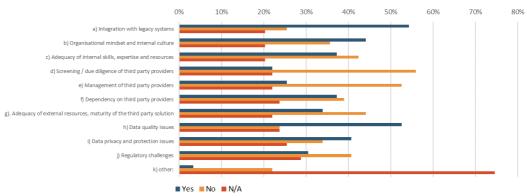
Q26.1 Have you implemented/used any RegTech solution?



Q26.2: If 'Yes', please indicate the areas where RegTech solutions are implemented.



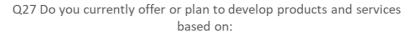
Q26.3 What are the challenges you have faced / are facing for the development and implementation of RegTech solutions (if any)?

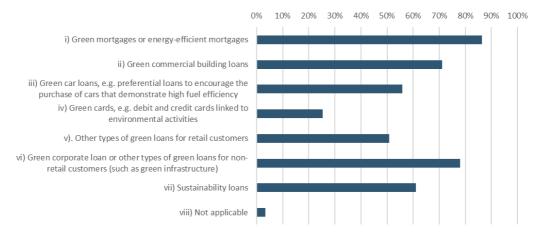




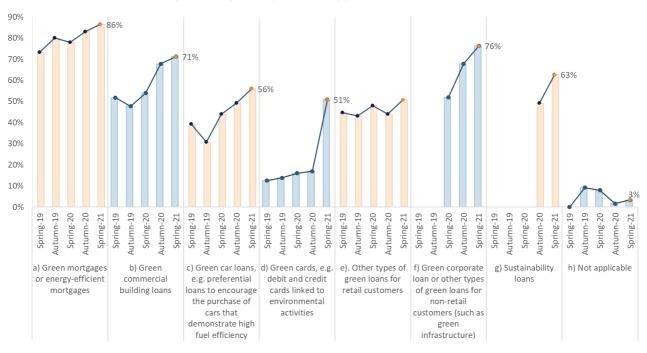
6. Sustainable Finance

Question 27: Spring 2021 results





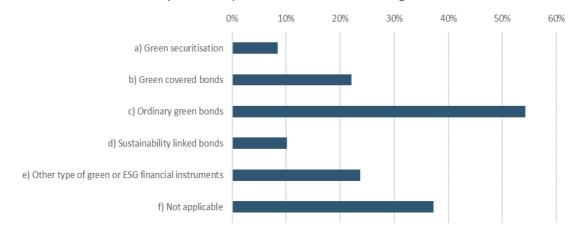
Question 27: comparison with earlier results



Q27 Do you currently offer or plan to develop products and services based on:

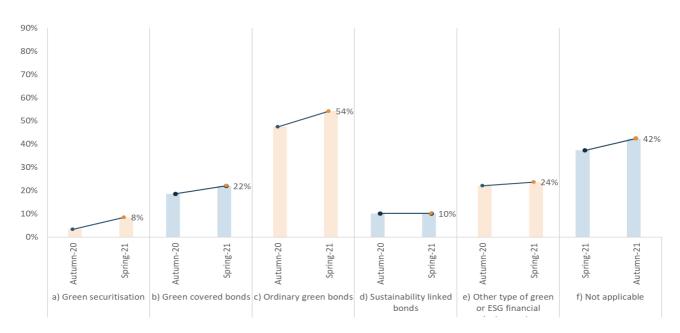


Question 28: Spring 2021 results



Q28 Have you already issued one of the following instruments?

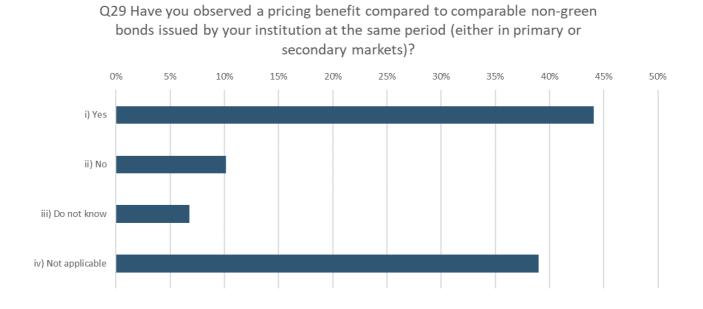
Question 28: comparison with earlier results



Q28 Have you already issued one of the following instruments?

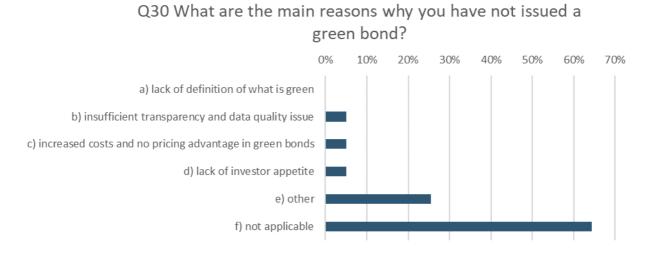


Question 29: Spring 2021 results

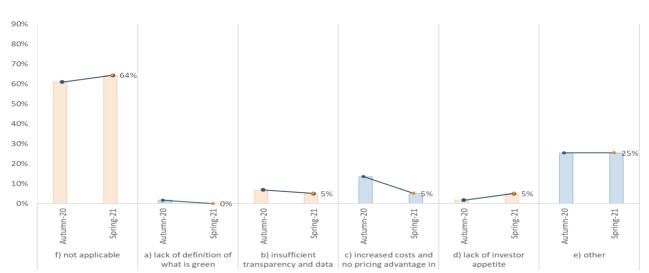




Question 30: Spring 2021 results



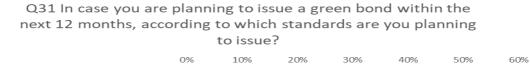
Question 30: comparison with earlier results

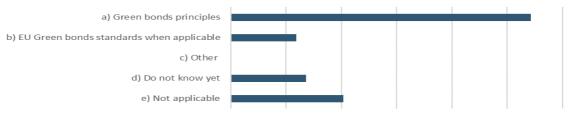


Q30 What are the main reasons why you have not issued a green bond?

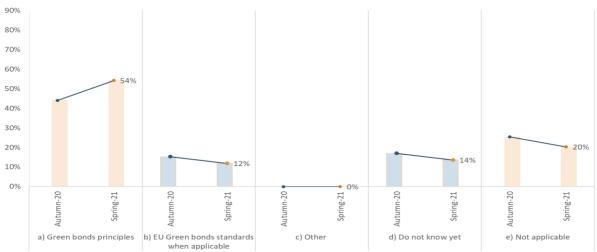


Question 31: Spring 2021 results





Question 31: comparison with earlier results



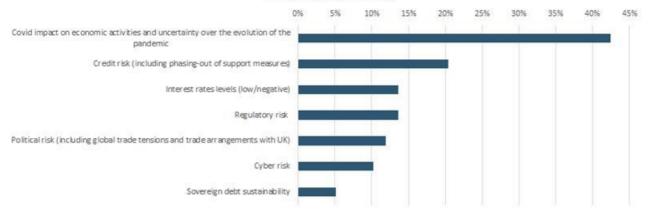
Q31 In case you are planning to issue a green bond within the next 12 months, according to which standards are you planning to issue?



7. General open question

Question 32: Spring 2021 results

Q32 Looking at the EU banking sector, you expect other sources of risk or vulnerabilities to increase further in the next 6-12 months. Please indicate possible additional sources of risks and vulnerabilities.





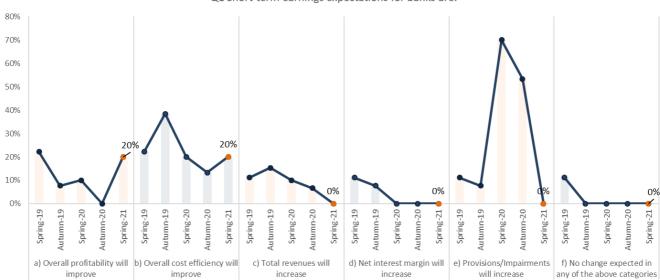
Market analysts' questionnaire

1. Business model / strategy / profitability

Question 1: Spring 2021 results



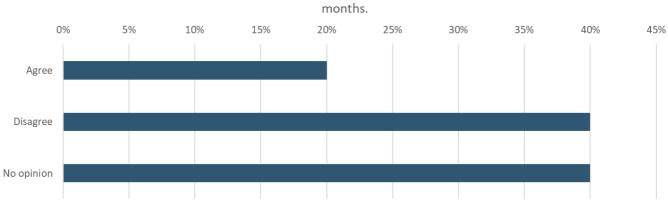
Question 1: Comparison with earlier results



Q1 Short term earnings expectations for banks are:



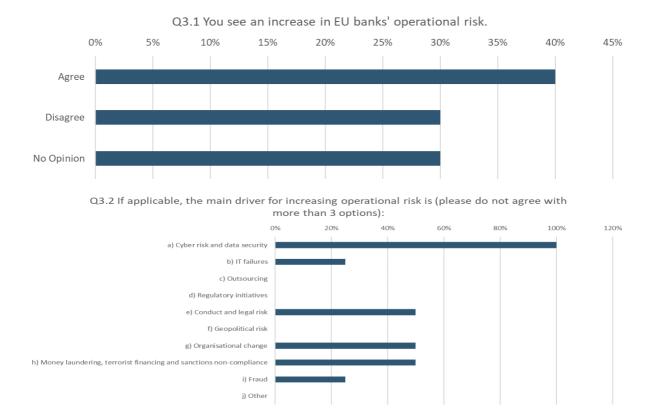
Question 2: Spring 2021 results



Q2 Looking at the EU banking sector, you expect heightened litigation costs in the next 6-12

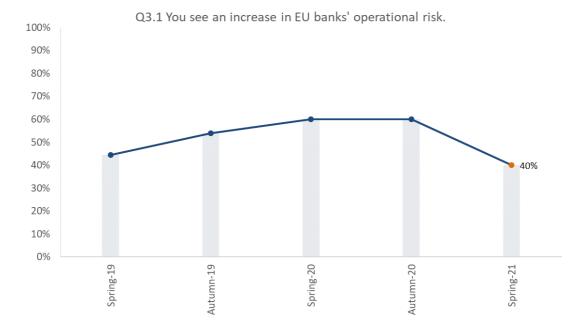


Question 3: Spring 2021 results

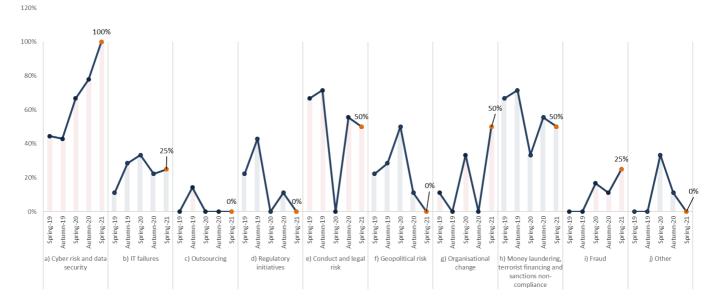




Question 3: comparison with earlier results

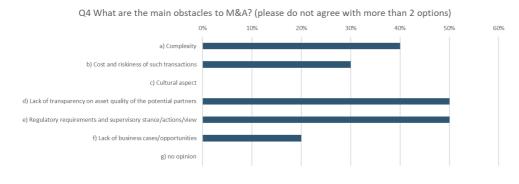


Q3.2 If applicable, the main driver for increasing operational risk is (please do not agree with more than 3 options):

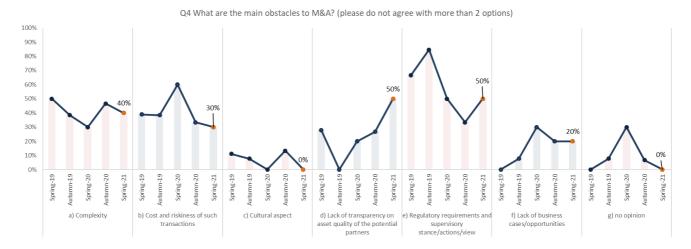




Question 4: Spring 2021 results



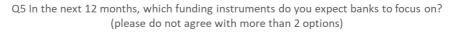
Question 4: comparison with earlier results

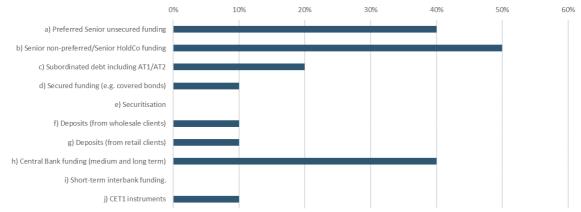




2. Funding / Liquidity

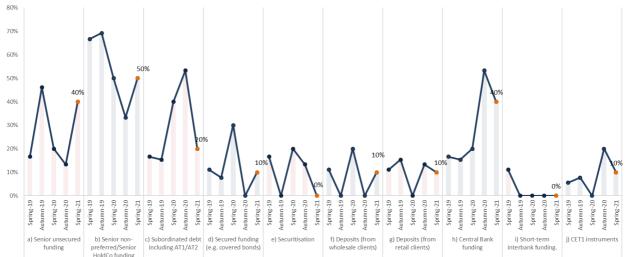
Question 5: Spring 2021 results





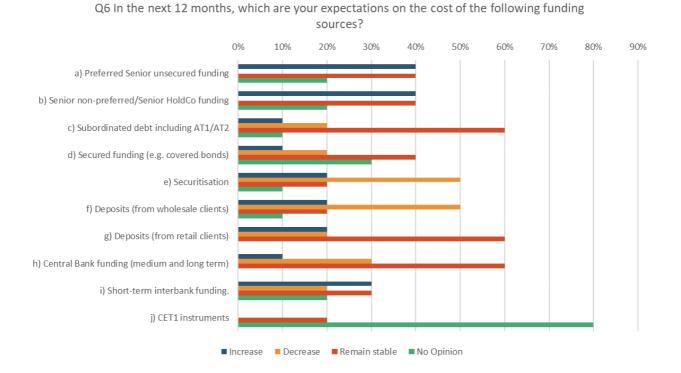
Question 5: comparison with earlier results







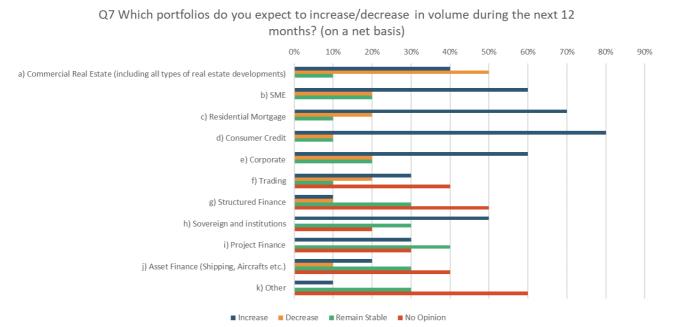
Question 6: Spring 2021 results





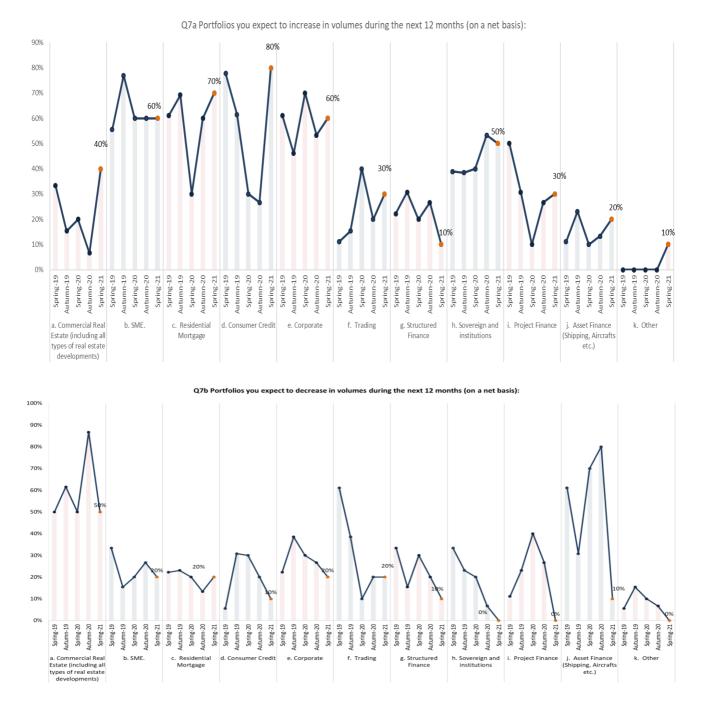
3. Asset composition & quality

Question 7: Spring 2021 results



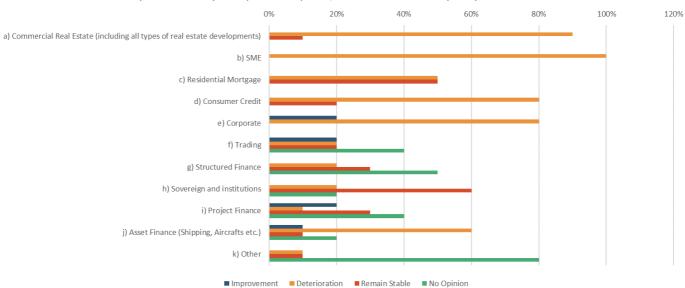


Question 7: comparison with earlier results





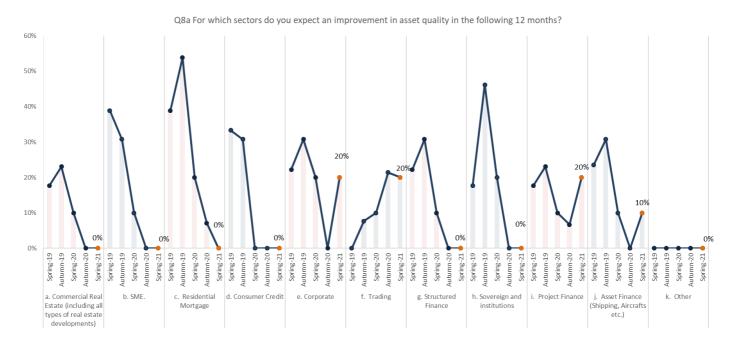
Question 8: Spring 2021 results



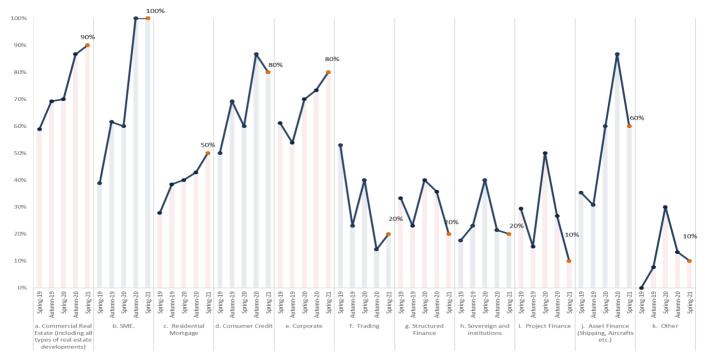
Q8 Which portfolios do you expect to improve/deteriorate in asset quality in the next 12 months?



Question 8: comparison with earlier results

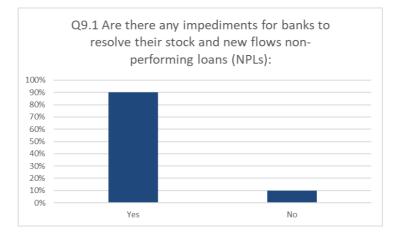


Q8b For which sectors do you expect a deterioration in asset quality in the following 12 months?

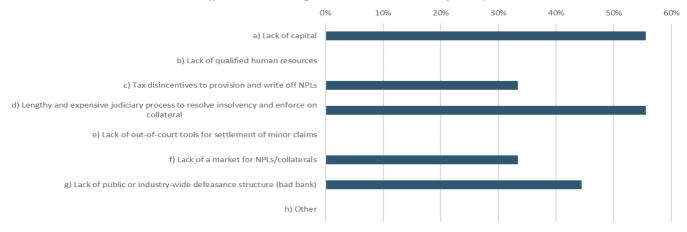




Question 9: Spring 2021 results



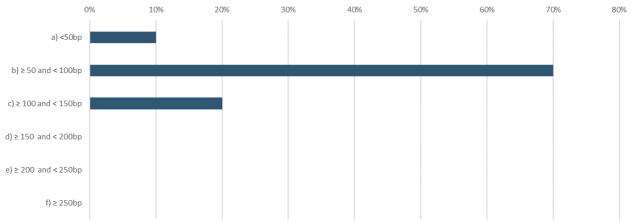
Q9.2 If Yes, what are the main impediments for the banks to resolve non-performing loans? (please do not agree with more than 3 options)





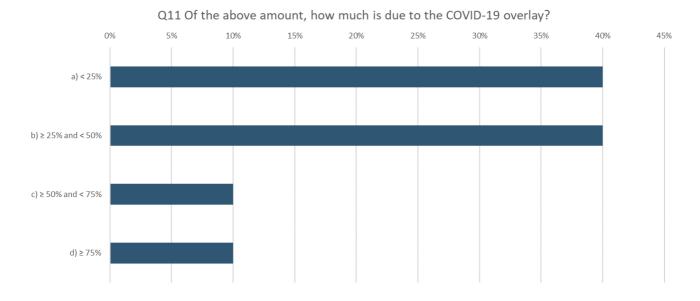
Question 10: Spring 2021 results







Question 11: Spring 2021 results



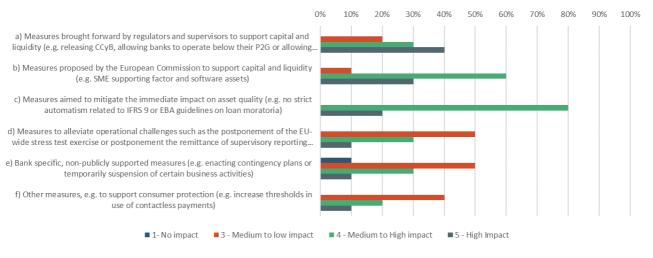
57



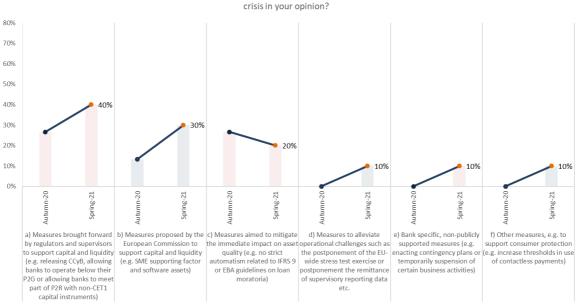
4. General Questions

Question 12: Spring 2021 results

Q12 Please rate the efficiency of the measures, which were more efficient in mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in your opinion?



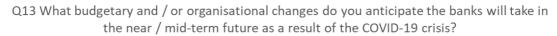
Question 12: comparison with other results

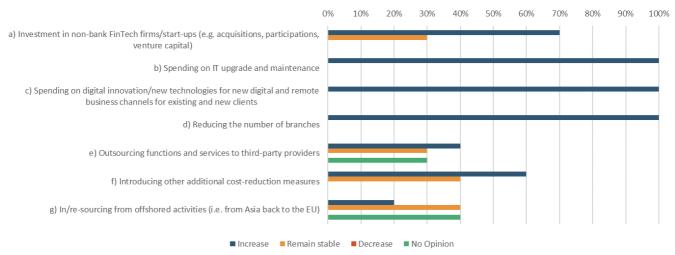


Q12 Please rate the efficiency of the measures, which were more efficient in mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in your opinion?

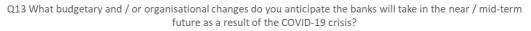


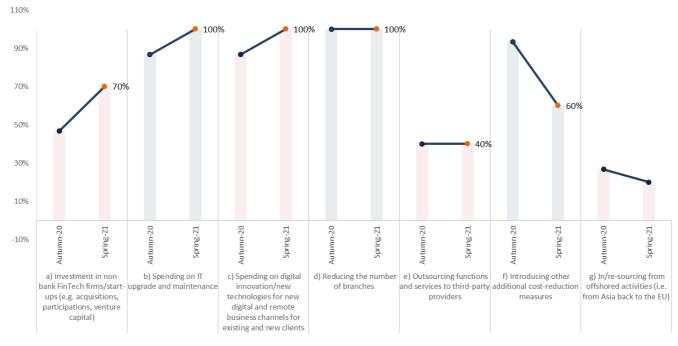
Question 13: Spring 2021 results





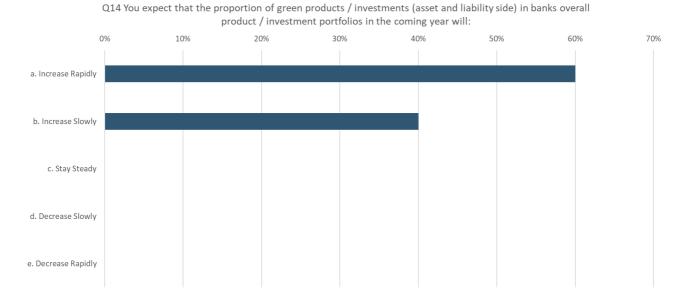
Question 13: comparison with other results



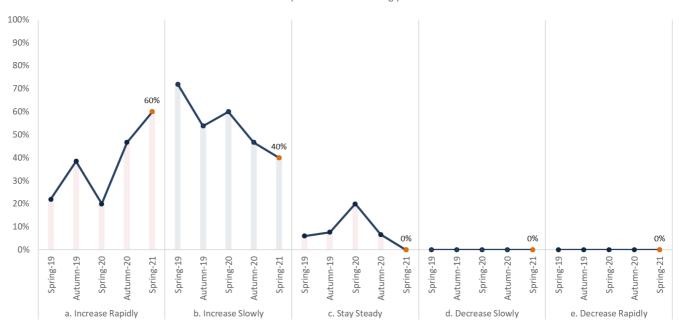




Question 14: Spring 2021 results



Question 14: comparison with other results



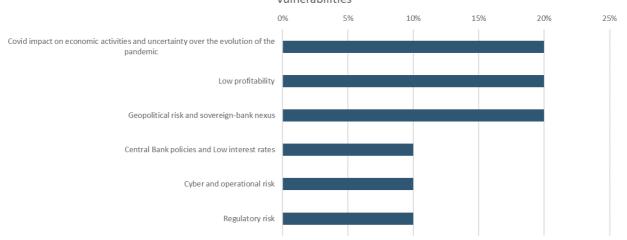
Q14 You expect that the proportion of green products / investments (asset and liability side) in banks overall product / investment portfolios in the coming year will:



5. General open question

Question 15: Spring 2021 results

Q15 Looking at the EU banking sector, you expect other sources of risks or vulnerabilities to increase further in the next 6-12 months. Please indicate possible additional of risks and vulnerabilities





Annex: List of EU banks involved in current RAQ survey

Financial Institution	Country
BAWAG Group	Austria
Erste Group Bank AG	Austria
RBI	Austria
Belfius Bank	Belgium
KBC Group	Belgium
First Investment Bank AD	Bulgaria
Bank of Cyprus	Cyprus
Hellenic Bank	Cyprus
Danske Bank A/S	Denmark
Nykredit Realkredit Group	Denmark
AS LHV Pank	Estonia
Nordea Bank Abp	Finland
OP Financial Group	Finland
BNP PARIBAS S.A.	France
CONFEDERATION NATIONALE CREDIT MUTUEL (CNCM)	France
CREDIT AGRICOLE SA	France
Groupe BPCE	France
La Banque Postale	France
Societe Generale	France
Commerzbank AG	Germany
Deutsche Bank AG	Germany
DZ BANK AG Deutsche Zentral-Genossenschaftsbank	Germany
Helaba - Landesbank Hessen-Thüringen	Germany
Landesbank Baden-Württemberg	Germany
NORD/LB Norddeutsche Landesbank - Girozentrale	Germany
ALPHA Bank	Greece
Eurobank S.A.	Greece
NATIONAL BANK OF GREECE	Greece
PIRAEUS FINANCIAL HOLDINGS S.A.	Greece
OTP Bank Nyrt.	Hungary
Allied Irish Banks Plc	Ireland
Bank of Ireland	Ireland
Landsbankinn hf.	Iceland



Financial Institution

Country

Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena Spa	Italy
Banco BPM SpA	Italy
BPER Banca S.p.A.	Italy
INTESA SANPAOLO	Italy
UniCredit S.p.A.	Italy
Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat	Luxembourg
Bank of Valletta plc	Malta
ABN AMRO	The Netherlands
Cooperatieve Rabobank U.A.	The Netherlands
ING Groep N.V.	The Netherlands
DNB Bank ASA	Norway
SpareBank 1 SR-Bank ASA	Norway
Bank Pekao S.A.	Poland
PKO Bank Polski S.A.	Poland
Banco Comercial Português S.A.	Portugal
Caixa Geral de Depósitos, S.A. (CGD)	Portugal
BANCA TRANSILVANIA	Romania
Nova Ljubljanska banka	Slovenia
Banc Sabadell, S.A.	Spain
BANCO BILBAO VIZCAYA ARGENTARIA, S.A.	Spain
BANKINTER, S.A.	Spain
CAIXABANK, S.A.	Spain
Santander Group	Spain
SEB	Sweden
Svenska Handelsbanken AB	Sweden
Swedbank AB	Sweden



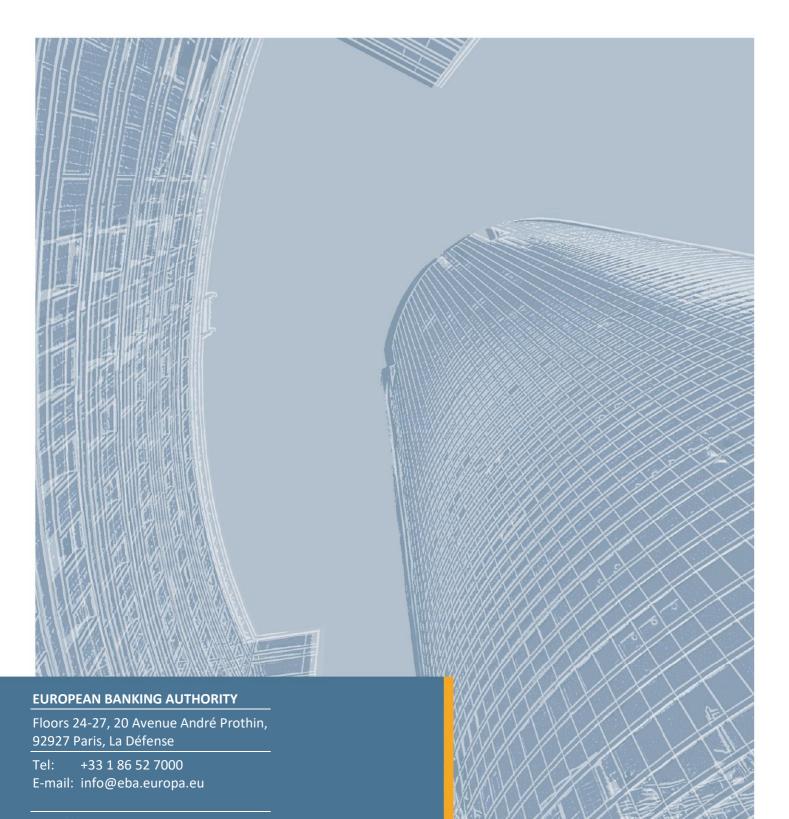
Appendix: Risk Assessment Questionnaire for banks

[added on the following pages]



Appendix: Risk Assessment Questionnaire for market analysts

[added on the following pages]



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