

25th STEP MARKET COMMITTEE MEETING
- London, 16 November 2017, 10.30-14.00 London time –

Minutes

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting on 6th June 2017 are approved.

2. SECRETARIAT REPORT ON STEP LABELLING OPERATIONS

Ms. TORRES explained that 159 programmes remained active in the STEP database since the last STEP Market Committee (6 June 2017). Since then, 4 programmes have been withdrawn from the STEP Directory and 4 new programmes have been added.

Separately, the Secretariat keeps on receiving annual/exceptional update requests (several per week), and requests for pre-screening that lead to temporary bottlenecks.

As announced in previous meetings, the STEP Secretariat has adopted a more proactive stance towards late updates. As a result, no programme is currently beyond the 3 years and 3 months limit established for renewals.

Mr. SINNIGER inquired about the reasons behind the label withdrawals. These included a merger and cessation of certain activities and short-term paper programmes.

3. ECB REPORT ON STEP STATISTICS

Mr. PETIT gave a presentation on the recent and future developments of STEP statistics.

The cut-off date for all figures and charts referred to in the presentation was the end of October 2017.

Over the first ten months of 2017, the ECB has observed an overall decrease in outstanding amounts despite a steep growth in the first quarter. This leads the total outstanding amount at the end of October to be slightly below €400 billion. Owing to similar developments observed in the

worldwide issuance of euro-denominated debt securities, the relative share of the STEP market remained stable compared to the previous STEP market committee meeting.

In October 2017, the share of STEP papers denominated in EUR was 65.7%, which is significantly higher than the respective share presented in May 2017. This increase was balanced by an overall decrease in the USD-denominated issuance, reaching 20.4% of the total STEP outstanding amount. This latter issuance of STEP papers denominated in USD significantly decreased over one year.

Following the initial presentation of public access to STEP information as published by the ECB last May 2017, Mr. PETIT discussed updated figures. An average of 1000 STEP time series were downloaded directly from the ECB SDW on a monthly basis, by 70 to 250 unique visitors. The figures remain globally stable over the last year.

Regarding the operations for the production of the STEP statistics, Mr. PETIT underlined that the cooperation with the STEP Secretariat remains very satisfactory and both parties keep on working together in order to enhance the information flows. Mr. PETIT also mentioned that the STEP production environment at the ECB went through a major IT release to bring servers to the highest performance standards. Following this release, the production platform is able to receive the new programme format (NEU CP) from the STEP Secretariat, which should be shortly integrated. Finally, Mr. PETIT mentioned that the ECB STEP team has kept on liaising with security settlement systems due to data quality issues. Additional details and requests for actions were put forward to tackle the specific cases of wrong reporting to the ECB. In parallel, Mr. PETIT ensured that the ECB team takes necessary measures on a daily basis to ensure accurate statistics to be published on a weekly basis.

4. MARKETING ACTIVITIES

A redesigned STEP website was introduced in July 2017. Mr. GIL BONET introduced the evolution of key metrics in the STEP website in terms of audience and behavior.

There have been no dramatic changes in the use of the website. In details, there has been a drop in the visits during July and August 2017 that cannot be observed in the figures from the same period of 2016. As of mid-September, the trend starts to revert when the Secretariat started some promotional activities with advertisements on LinkedIn. The bounce rate (users that leave after seeing only one page) has increased; however, this is natural given that there has been a more proactive approach to reach potential new users of STEP.

The aim of the renewal of the STEP website was to adapt it to be used with mobile phones and tablets. The preferred device to access the STEP website remains a desktop computer or laptop (used by 80-90% of the users, with slight variations on a monthly basis). We see that both the

amount of traffic and its quality have dropped over the summer in all devices. Conversely, September and October show an increase in volume and quality. A trend cannot be identified yet.

The changes introduced with the new website have visibly restructured the way users get to the STEP website: direct access has doubled; referrals have dramatically dropped; social networks have appeared following the advertising campaign launched in mid-September 2017.

On one side, the number of users accessing the STEP website via the EMMI website has dropped by 95%; however, no changes have been introduced in the references to STEP on the EMMI website. On the opposite the number of direct visitors has doubled and other referrals have provided relevant traffic.

The corporate profile of STEP on LinkedIn was created in July 2017 and it has attracted 48 followers (until 27 October). Regular updates have been published through this social network reaching a professional audience. More importantly, the Secretariat has decided to promote the STEP label with the video produced in 2016. This video has been posted as a sponsored update (meaning that it is shown to a target audience beyond the STEP network).

Simultaneously, Mr. HEBEISEN gave presentations to explain the features of STEP at 2 events focused on Money Market funds with a positive feedback from the audience:

- European Money Fund Forum (14 June 2017 – London)
- Crane's Euro Money Fund Symposium (26 September 2017 – Paris)

5. AOB

The next meeting will be organized during June 2018 in Brussels.