

**COMMISSION de SURVEILLANCE  
du SECTEUR FINANCIER**

Luxembourg, 17 April 2013

To natural or legal persons domiciled  
or established within the European  
Union or in a third country

<b>CIRCULAR CSSF 13/565</b>
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**Re: Amendment to Circular CSSF 12/548 transposing the guidelines of the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) on the exemption for market making activities and primary market operations**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We follow up on Circular CSSF 12/548 of 30 October 2012 on the entry into force of Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects of credit default swaps and details on certain practical aspects of notification, disclosure and exemption procedures (“**Circular CSSF 12/548**”) further to the publication on 2 April 2013 by the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) of guidelines on the exemption for market making activities and primary market operations under Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects of credit default swaps (the “**Regulation**”), entitled “Guidelines - Exemption for market making activities and primary market operations under Regulation (EU) 236/2012 of the European Parliament and the Council on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps”, Ref. ESMA/2013/74 (the “**Guidelines**”). The purpose of this circular is to transpose the Guidelines into Luxembourg regulations by amending Circular CSSF 12/548 by incorporating the Guidelines into Section 2 “Exemption for market making activities and primary market operations” of this circular.

The Guidelines aim at providing clarity to market participants and national supervisors on the operation of the exemption for market making activities and primary market operations under Article 17 of the Regulation and at ensuring a level playing field, consistency of market practices and convergence of supervisory practices amongst national securities markets regulators across the European Union.

More specifically, the Guidelines provide details and clarification on:

- the scope of the exemption for market making activities, including the required link between the relevant financial instrument, the trading venue or “equivalent” third country market and the market membership of the notifying entity;
- the definition of the relevant competent authority for notification, in particular for notifying entities from third countries;
- the process of notification of the intent to use the exemption and its content, including common templates for notification;
- the approach to processing the notification received by the relevant competent authority and the standards that the competent authority should take into account when assessing the eligibility of the notifying entity’s activities for the exemption, and;
- the monitoring of the conditions of eligibility once the exemption is used.

The Guidelines are appended as an Annex to this circular. They are also available on ESMA's website at [www.esma.europa.eu](http://www.esma.europa.eu).

ESMA published, on 17 September 2012, a draft version of the Guidelines in the form of a consultation paper (Ref. ESMA/2012/580), of which certain key elements, in particular certain details on the process of notification of the intent to make use of the exemption under Article 17 of the Regulation and its content, and the exemption process by the relevant competent authority were taken into account in Section 2 “Exemption for market making activities and primary market operations” of Circular CSSF 12/548.

**Circular CSSF 12/548 is amended as follows:**

1. In the introductory section of Circular CSSF 12/548 (at the top of page 3, second line after “adverse events”), the following reference is added:

**“(“Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 918/2012”)”.**

2. The heading “Exemption for market making activities and primary market operations” of Section 2 of Circular CSSF 12/548 is amended as follows:

**“Exemption for market making activities and primary market operations and ESMA guidelines in this respect”**

3. In Section 2 of Circular CSSF 12/548, a new paragraph is inserted (after the first paragraph), which reads as follows:

On 2 April 2013, ESMA published guidelines on the exemption for market making activities and primary market operations under Article 17 of the Regulation (Ref. ESMA/2013/74), entitled "Guidelines - Exemption for market making activities and primary market operations under Regulation (EU) 236/2012 of the European Parliament and the Council on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps" (the “**Guidelines**”).

The Guidelines, which are annexed to this circular as Annex VI, provide further details and clarification on:

- the scope of the exemption for market making activities, including the required link between the relevant financial instrument, the trading venue or “equivalent” third country market and the market membership of the notifying entity;
- the definition of the relevant competent authority for notification, in particular for notifying entities from third countries;
- the process of notification of the intent to use the exemption and its content, including common templates for notification;
- the approach to processing the notification received by the relevant competent authority and the standards that the competent authority should take into account when assessing the eligibility of the notifying entity’s activities for the exemption, and;
- the monitoring of the conditions of eligibility once the exemption is used.

The natural or legal persons concerned, who give to the CSSF a notification of intent to make use of the exemption for market making activities or authorised primary dealers activities in accordance with Article 17 of the Regulation, must comply with the Guidelines. They shall refer in particular to the details set out in Sections V, VI and VII of the Guidelines, in relation to the definition and scope of the exemption for market making activities, the general principles and qualifying criteria of eligibility for the exemption for market making activities, and the determination of the competent authority that should be notified by a third country entity not authorised in the Union.”

4. In point c) entitled “Notification 30 calendar days in advance and exemption process” of Section 2 of Circular CSSF 12/548, the fourth paragraph is updated as follows:

“It should be noted that when processing a notification of intent and assessing whether a natural or legal person concerned satisfies the conditions of the exemption for market making activities or authorised primary dealers activities, the CSSF will take into account the Guidelines issued by ESMA in relation to the requirements of Article 17 of the Regulation.”

5. In point d) entitled “Content of the notification of intent” of Section 2 of Circular CSSF 12/548:

- A. In the second paragraph, a reference to the Guidelines is added at the beginning of the first sentence:

“In conformity with the Guidelines, a notification of intent (...)”

- B. Bullet points 5, 6 and 8 relating to the “Exemption for market making activities” are clarified as follows:

- “Description of the market making activities specifying particular capacity according to Article 2(1)(k) of the Regulation:
  1. Capacity under Article 2(1)(k)(i);
  2. Capacity under Article 2(1)(k)(ii) and the nature of client facilitation services:
    - a. Fulfilling orders initiated by clients;
    - b. Responding to clients’ requests to trade.”
  
- “For each capacity, the financial instrument(s) for which the intent to use the exemption is notified. It can take the form of a list of individual financial instruments or a clear specification of the instruments concerned (e.g. national equity index on a particular date), provided that it results in a closed list of specific instruments and allows the notified competent authority to unambiguously identify all individual instruments for which the exemption is declared;”
  
- “Where the market making activities are carried out on instruments referred to in paragraph 30<sup>1</sup> of Section V of the Guidelines, e.g. exchange-traded funds: the corresponding category of financial instruments according to Part 1 and 2 of Annex I of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 918/2012, e.g. category: shares/units of exchange-traded funds;”

C. An additional bullet point relating to the “Exemption for market making activities” is inserted, which reads as follows:

- “Where no previous market making activity in a particular financial instrument can be demonstrated (e.g. IPO, intention to start a new market making business in a new financial instrument):
  1. For market making activities under Article 2(1)(k)(i) capacity: indication of expected daily volumes of market making activities in a financial instrument;
  2. For market making activities under Article 2(1)(k)(ii) capacity: indication of expected weekly volumes of market making activities in a financial instrument.”

6. In Annex IV of Circular CSSF 12/548 entitled “Notification of intent to make use of the exemption under Article 17(1) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects

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<sup>1</sup> “If market making activities are carried out in a financial instrument, different from a share or a sovereign debt instrument, that creates long or short positions as defined in Articles 3 and 4 of the Regulation, the notification should specify the category of financial instrument according to Part 1 and 2 of Annex I of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 918/2012 and the corresponding share or issuer of the sovereign debt. Importantly, activities in the corresponding share or sovereign debt will be exempted only to the extent they are undertaken for the purpose of hedging market making activities in that financial instrument, pursuant to point (iii) of Article 2(1)(k) of the Regulation.”

of Credit Default Swaps”, point d)(ii) (“FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT(S)”) of Section 3 (“Details of Market Making”) is clarified as follows:

“CATEGORY OF INSTRUMENT on which market making activities are conducted, only when different from (i)  
(by designation of the financial instrument/ underlying)”

7. In Annex V of Circular CSSF 12/548 entitled “Format of the spreadsheet to use together with the form for the notification of intent to make use of the exemption under Article 17(1) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps”, the second table (“For related instruments”) is amended as follows:

- The heading of the table is clarified as follows:  
“**For instruments other than shares, sovereign debt instruments or sovereign CDS that create short or long position**”;
- The heading of the second column (“Category (part C, annex I of Directive 2004/39/EC)”) is changed as follows:  
“Category (Part 1 and 2, Annex I of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 918/2012)”;
- The fourth column (“Market Membership”) is removed;
- The Table is put at the end of Annex V.

8. The Guidelines are included in Circular CSSF 12/548 as Annex VI.

The coordinated version of Circular CSSF 12/548 as amended by this circular is available on the CSSF’s website.

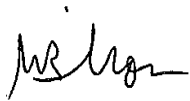
This circular comes into force with immediate effect.

Yours faithfully,

COMMISSION DE SURVEILLANCE DU SECTEUR FINANCIER



Claude SIMON  
Directeur



Andrée BILLON  
Directeur



Simone DELCOURT  
Directeur



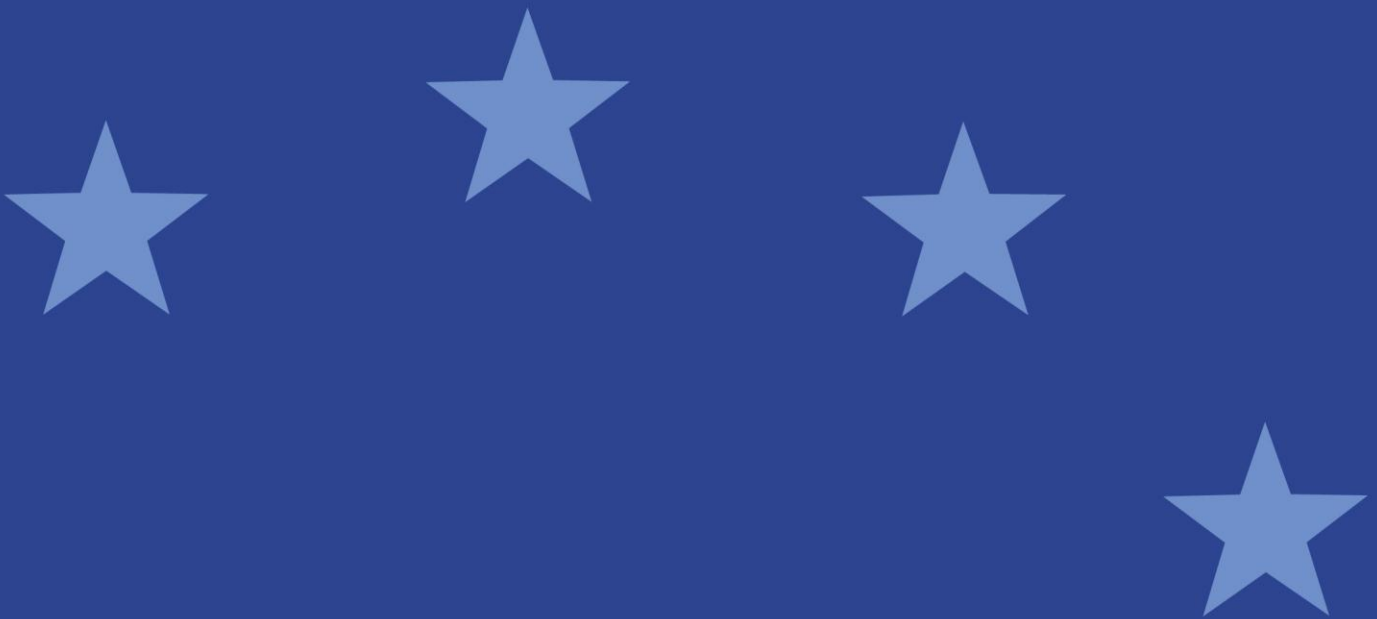
Jean GUILL  
Directeur général



European Securities and  
Markets Authority

## Guidelines

Exemption for market making activities and primary market operations under Regulation (EU) 236/2012 of the European Parliament and the Council on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps



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## I. Scope

1. These guidelines apply to investment firms, credit institutions, third-country entities, firms as referred to in point (l) of Article 2(1) of Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on markets in financial instruments (MiFID).
2. These guidelines apply in relation to notification for the market making activities exemption and for the exemption as authorised primary dealer under Article 17 of the Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on short selling and certain aspects of credit default swaps (Regulation).

## II. Definitions

*EEA:* European Economic Area

*ESMA Regulation:* Regulation (EU) No 1095/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 establishing a European Supervisory Authority (European Securities and Markets Authority), amending Decision No 716/2009/EC and repealing Commission Decision 2009/77/EC.

*MiFID:* Directive 2004/39/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 on markets in financial instruments.

## III. Purpose

3. The purpose of these guidelines is to:
  - Assist the notifying entity in the notification process, by specifying and describing the content of the written notification and providing a template notification form;
  - Develop a common approach to submitting the notification form, assessing eligibility of the notifying entity's activities for the exemption and monitoring of the conditions of eligibility once the exemption is used.

## IV. Compliance and reporting obligations

### Status of the guidelines

4. This document contains guidelines issued under Article 16 of the ESMA Regulation. In accordance with Article 16(3) of the ESMA Regulation competent authorities and financial market participants must make every effort to comply with guidelines and recommendations.
5. Competent authorities to whom the guidelines apply should comply by incorporating them into their supervisory practices, including where particular guidelines within the document are directed primarily at financial market participants.

### Reporting requirements





6. Competent authorities to which these guidelines apply must notify ESMA whether they comply or intend to comply with the guidelines, with reasons for non-compliance by date two months after publication. A template for notifications is available from the ESMA website.
7. Financial market participants are not required to report.

## V. Background and Introduction

8. The Regulation published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 24 March 2012, is applicable from 1 November 2012.
9. Article 17 of the Regulation provides for exemption for market making activities and primary market operations. Provisions of the Regulation prescribe the notification of intent to make use of the exemption to be made to the competent authority as determined by Article 17(5) (the home Member State for the market making exemption) and 17(6) (the relevant competent authority of the concerned sovereign debt for authorised primary dealer exemption), while the exempted activities might also take place in other jurisdictions outside the supervisory remit of that authority. In the particular case of third country entities not authorised in the Union the notification has to be sent to the competent authority of the main trading venue in the Union in which the third country entity trades (see section VII on the determination of the competent authority).
10. In order to ensure a level playing field, consistency of market practices and convergence of supervisory practices across the EEA, ESMA has prepared these guidelines on market making activities as defined in Article 2(1) of the Regulation and on a common approach to the application of the exemptions under Article 17.
11. According to Article 2(1)(k) ‘market making activities’ means the activities of an investment firm, a credit institution, a third-country entity, or a firm as referred to in point (l) of Article 2(1) of Directive 2004/39/EC (MiFID), which is a member of a trading venue or of a market in a third country, the legal and supervisory framework of which has been declared equivalent by the Commission pursuant to Article 17(2) where it deals as principal in a financial instrument, whether traded on or outside a trading venue, in any of the following capacities:
  - a. by posting firm, simultaneous two-way quotes of comparable size and at competitive prices, with the result of providing liquidity on a regular and ongoing basis to the market;
  - b. as part of its usual business, by fulfilling orders initiated by clients or in response to clients’ requests to trade;
  - c. by hedging positions arising from the fulfilment of tasks under points (a) and (b).
12. Article 2(1)(n) defines ‘authorised primary dealer’ as a natural or legal person who has signed an agreement with a sovereign issuer or who has been formally recognised as a primary dealer by or on behalf of a sovereign issuer and who, in accordance with that agreement or recognition, has committed to dealing as principal in connection with primary and secondary market operations relating to debt issued by that issuer.
13. Provisions of Article 17(1) exempt entities undertaking transactions due to market making activities from net short position transparency requirements for shares and sovereign debt, the restrictions on uncovered short sales in shares and sovereign debt and the prohibition to enter into uncovered sovereign CDS positions. It should be emphasised that the exemption applies only to the transactions carried out in performance of market making activities as defined above in paragraph 11 (a) – (c); it does not apply to the entire scope of activity of the notifying entity. As recital 26 clearly states, such an exemption does not cover the proprietary trading of those persons.

14. According to Article 17(3) of the Regulation, persons exempted as authorised primary dealers as defined in Article 2(1)(n) are not required to notify net short positions in sovereign debt, are not subject to the restriction on uncovered short sales in sovereign debt instruments and are not prohibited to enter into an uncovered sovereign CDS transaction. It should be emphasised that the exemption does not apply to the entire scope of activity of the authorised primary dealers. It is also important to take into account that this exemption applies to any financial instruments, including credit default swaps related to the sovereign debt for which that person is an authorized primary dealer and is acting in that capacity.
15. Use of exemptions under Articles 17(1) and 17(3) can only be made where previous notification of intent to make use of the exemption has been made in writing to the relevant competent authority at least 30 calendar days before the intended first use of the exemption.
16. The competent authority can prohibit the use of the exemption by the notifying person if it considers that the person does not satisfy the conditions of the exemption. The justified prohibition would be communicated in writing within the 30 calendar days upon having received complete notification including all relevant information as specified in paragraph 65. When the competent authority is satisfied the notification meets the conditions of the exemption, it may inform accordingly the notifying entity without having to wait for the 30 calendar days' period to expire.
17. It is acknowledged that 30 days in advance requirement foreseen in the Regulation might pose practical difficulties in some particular instances (e.g. IPO). In this case the competent authority should be notified as soon as possible so that it may be in a position to i) process the notification in less than 30 days and ii) confirm to the notifying entity that it does not intend to prohibit the use of the exemption. ESMA understands such an express positive communication by the competent authority allows the entity to make use of the exemption from the date the notification is received.
18. In addition, the concerned competent authority can, at any time, decide to withdraw the benefits of the exemption in case there have been changes in the circumstances of the natural or legal person so that it no longer satisfies the conditions of the exemption. This may result from the competent authorities own initiative and assessment or from a subsequent notification received under Articles 17(9) or (10) from the natural or legal person indicating a change affecting its ability to use the exemption.

## **VI. Definition and scope of the exemption for market making activities**

19. In order to ensure the exemption is applied in a uniform manner it is important to achieve a common understanding of the exempted activities. More precisely, in order to qualify for the exemption, market making activities have to be undertaken, by dealing as principal in a financial instrument in any of the two capacities and related hedging activities specified in Article 2(1)(k), whether on or outside a trading venue, by the following entities:
  - a. An investment firm which is a member of a trading venue, ; or
  - b. A credit institution which is a member of a trading venue; or
  - c. A third-country entity which is a member of a market in a third country, the legal and supervisory framework of which has been declared equivalent by the Commission pursuant to Article 17(2); or

- d. A third country entity which is member of a trading venue in the European Union; or
  - e. A firm as referred to in point (l) of Article 2(1) of Directive 2004/39/EC, which is a member of a trading venue.
20. Concluding on the above, there are three preconditions for particular activities of an entity to be exempted from the Regulation's provisions:
- a. being a member of the market on which it
  - b. deals as principal in one of the capacities defined in paragraph 11 above
  - c. in the financial instrument for which it notifies the exemption.
21. However, the person is not required to conduct its market making activities solely on that venue or market or to be recognised as market maker or liquidity provider under the rules of that trading venue or market. Neither is there a requirement to have a separate contractual obligation to carry out market making activities. For example, a person could benefit from the exemption by trading on the trading venue or market to hedge the positions, resulting from its activities under Article 2(1)(k)(i) or Article 2(1)(k)(ii) of the Regulation, conducted outside this trading venue or market.
22. ESMA records that the European Commission services have expressed in writing their legal analysis of the market making definition in Article 2(1) k of the Regulation, which makes clear that the assessment of each and every of the above conditions for the qualification of market making activities has to be done with respect to each individual financial instrument. According to this analysis by the European Commission, market making activities on instruments that are not admitted to trading or traded on any trading venue, like is currently the case for many sovereign CDS, some sovereign bonds or non-listed derivatives, could not qualify for the exemption under Article 17(1) of the Regulation, since the membership requirement cannot be met.
23. It should be noted that the exemption only covers activities when, in the particular circumstances of each transaction, they are genuinely undertaken in the capacity of market making as defined in Article 2(1)(k) of the Regulation. Consequently, persons notifying the intent to make use of the exemption are not expected to hold significant short positions, in relation to market making activities, other than for brief periods.
24. Arbitrage activities (in particular those executed between different financial instruments but with the same underlying security) are not considered market making activities under the scope of the Regulation and therefore cannot be exempted.
25. When carrying out hedging activities under Article 2(1)(k)(iii), the size of the position acquired for the purpose of hedging should be proportionate to the size of the exposure hedged in order for these activities to qualify for exemption. The person should be able to justify upon request from the competent authority why an exact match in size was not possible. The discrepancy should, in all cases, be insignificant.
26. Once the conditions are fulfilled, market making activities of an entity in or related to the particular instrument may, in accordance with Article 17(1), be exempted from Articles 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 and 14 of the Regulation, i.e. the transparency requirement relating to the net short positions in shares and

sovereign debt, the restriction on uncovered short sales in shares and sovereign debt instruments and the prohibition to enter into an uncovered sovereign CDS transaction.

27. However, the market making activities on sovereign CDS are not exempted from Article 8 of the Regulation, i.e. the notification to the competent authority of uncovered positions in sovereign CDS in cases where the competent authority has suspended the restriction on such instruments in accordance with Article 14(2).

### **An exemption on a per instrument basis**

28. According to Article 2(1)(k), market making activities, in their turn, are defined as dealing as principal in a financial instrument. Consequently, the exemption under Article 17(1) applies to activities in a financial instrument, i.e. on an instrument per instrument basis, and should not be considered as a global exemption for market making activities in general. The notification submitted when notifying the intent to use the exemption under Article 17(1) and further use of this exemption should, therefore, concern a financial instrument issued by a particular issuer subject to the Regulation i.e.:
  - a. Shares of an issuer falling under the regime;
  - b. A sovereign issuer as defined by the Regulation.
29. Any such notification of the exemption should identify:
  - a. For shares, the individual instrument for which market making activities are notified for the purpose of exemption;
  - b. For sovereign debt and CDS in sovereign debt if applicable, the sovereign issuer in the debt of which market making activities are notified for the purpose of the exemption.
30. If market making activities are carried out in a financial instrument, different from a share or a sovereign debt instrument, that creates long or short positions as defined in Articles 3 and 4 of the Regulation, the notification should specify the category of financial instrument according to Part 1 and 2 of Annex I of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 918/2012 and the corresponding share or issuer of the sovereign debt. Importantly, activities in the corresponding share or sovereign debt will be exempted only to the extent they are undertaken for the purpose of hedging market making activities in that financial instrument, pursuant to point (iii) of Article 2(1)(k) of the Regulation.
31. This information should allow the Competent Authority to best consider on an instrument by instrument or sovereign issuer by sovereign issuer basis, whether to prohibit the use of the exemption pursuant to Article 17(7) or not.
32. For the purpose of the exemption under Article 17(1) of the Regulation, the financial instruments referred to in paragraph 30 are understood as those listed financial instruments the positions in which must be taken into account when calculating the net short position. Namely, for shares – instruments listed in Part 1 of Annex I of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 918/2012:
  - a. Options,
  - b. Covered warrants,

- c. Futures,
- d. Index-related instruments,
- e. Contracts for difference,
- f. Shares/units of exchange-traded funds,
- g. Swaps,
- h. Spread bets,
- i. Packaged retail or professional investment products,
- j. Complex derivatives,
- k. Certificates linked to shares,
- l. Global depository receipts.

For sovereign issuers, instruments listed in Part 2 of Annex I of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 918/2012 :

- a. Options,
- b. Futures,
- c. Index-related instruments,
- d. Contracts for difference,
- e. Swaps,
- f. Spread bets,
- g. Complex derivatives,
- h. Certificates linked to sovereign debt.

- 33. In particular, a person's market making activities on derivatives and ETFs where, respectively, the underlying(s) of the derivative in question and the constituents of the concerned ETF are financial instruments falling within the scope of the regime could qualify for the exemption as long as trading in the relevant underlying is conducted for the purpose of hedging market making activities in the corresponding derivatives and ETFs.
- 34. This approach is in line with the text of the Regulation. It should also be recalled that in accordance with the general principles on the interpretation of European legislation, as applied generally, an exemption included in a European legal text should be interpreted narrowly. Moreover, any other interpretation would be limiting the effectiveness of the Regulation - de facto enlarging without limits the operation of the exemptions.

## **Membership requirement**

35. Any natural or legal person intending to make use of the exemption for market making activities and notifying the relevant competent authority of its intention should be a member of a trading venue (i.e. a regulated market or a MTF as defined in Article 4(14) and 4(15) of MiFID) or of an 'equivalent' market in a third country where it deals as principal in a financial instrument in any of the two capacities and related hedging activities specified in Article 2(1)(k).
36. In either case, the instrument which is the subject of the notification should be admitted to trading or traded on that venue or market of which that person is a member. For financial instruments referred to in paragraph 30, it is not required to be a member of the venue where the corresponding share or sovereign debt is admitted to trading or traded.

## **VII. Determination of the competent authority that should be notified**

37. The Regulation specifies to which competent authority a natural or legal person should notify its intention to make use of an exemption for market making activities or as an authorised primary dealer. However, there is a distinction between a third country entity not authorised in the Union and other persons, authorised, registered or domiciled in the Union.
38. For persons authorised in the Union, the relevant competent authority for notification (RCA) is:
  - for the exemption for market making activities, the competent authority of the home Member State of that person as defined in Article 2(1)(i) of the Regulation;
  - for the exemption as authorised primary dealers, the competent authority of the Member State of the concerned sovereign debt.
39. For a third country entity not authorised in the Union (third country entity), Article 17(8) of the Regulation defines the relevant competent authority as that of the main trading venue in the Union in which it trades. Therefore, when a third country entity intends to make use of the exemption for market making activities for a specific financial instrument or as a primary dealer, it should notify the authority of the trading venue where it carries out most of its trading activities in Europe.
40. The third country entity should assess its activity in the course of the preceding year on the basis of the turnover (as defined in Article 2(9) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1287/2006) per trading venue when performing market making activities in financial instruments in Europe and conducting secondary market operations on sovereign debt instruments as authorised primary dealer, and, identify on which European trading venue (i.e. regulated market or MTF) it is the most active.
41. This would provide each third country entity with a single entry point within Europe, a single European competent authority to which the notification should be addressed, irrespective of the financial instrument concerned.

## VIII. General principles and qualifying criteria of eligibility for the exemption

42. The below principles and criteria are not intended to supplement or change the definition of market making activities<sup>1</sup>, but rather set the standards that competent authorities shall take into account when assessing whether an entity notifying an exemption under Article 17(5) of the SSR is entitled to benefit from it.

### VIII.I. General principles

43. A person, as defined above, that intends to use the exemption set out in Article 17(1) of the Regulation must:

- be a member of a trading venue where the financial instrument in question is admitted to trading or traded and in which it conducts a market making activity on that instrument
- comply with the general rules and particular requirements for market making activities imposed by the trading venue or market in the third country, where applicable;
- maintain its records of orders and transactions relating to its market making activities for which it requests the exemption so that they can be easily distinguished from its proprietary trading activities;
- implement internal procedures with respect to the market making activities for which it claims the exemption that allow these activities to be immediately identified and the records readily available to the competent authority upon request;
- possess effective compliance and audit resources and a framework to enable it to monitor the market making activities for which it requests the exemption;
- be able to demonstrate at any time to the competent authority that its market making activity meets the principles and criteria in the Guidelines.

### VIII.II. Principles and qualifying criteria that should apply when “posting firm, simultaneous two-way quotes of comparable size and at competitive prices, with the result of providing liquidity on a regular and ongoing basis to the market” (Article 2(1)(k)(i))

44. The over-riding applicable principle for all asset classes is that an entity notifying its intention to make use of the exemption for its market making activities under Article 2(1)(k)(i) must provide liquidity to the market on a regular and ongoing basis by posting firm, simultaneous two-way quotes of comparable size and at competitive prices. It is important to note that the presence, price and size requirements are not independent but interact with one another. Market making activities under Article 2(1)(k)(i) that are exempt under Article 17 will be those where a person is offering prices that are competitive and in comparable sizes, in line with the specified qualifying criteria for at least the stated mandatory time presence where relevant.

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<sup>1</sup> In particular, these criteria do not intend to broaden or narrow the scope of market making as defined currently in MIFID or as it will be defined following the MIFID review.



45. ESMA considers it appropriate to include in this set of Guidelines the qualifying criteria against which competent authorities should assess notifications submitted under Article 17(5) in relation to equities, and equity derivatives traded on a trading venue. Criteria for other asset classes covered by the Regulation can be issued by ESMA in due course. ESMA will take account of the outcome on MiFIR and MiFID on the market making definition in order to ensure consistency of the European regulations. ESMA will continue to monitor developments in the market and may reconsider the defined qualifying criteria in the future.
46. As regards presence, a person undertaking market making activities under Article 2(1)(k)(i) must be present on the order book or be posting quotes on a trading venue for the relevant equity or equity derivative financial instrument(s) for which it requests the exemption for a sufficient proportion of the mandatory trading period. In this regard, the Regulation does not appear to require an uninterrupted presence though it provides that the presence should be regular and ongoing. Therefore, presence on the market should consist of:
  - a. conducting qualifying activities each day the market is open;
  - b. submitting orders that meet the below-mentioned criteria, according to a reasonable frequency, that is not interrupting the market making activity for a significant period of time during a single trading session.
47. As regards the requirement to post two-way quotes of comparable size and at competitive prices, the Regulation does not specify if the prices that are posted have to be similarly competitive on buy/sell. Hence ESMA considers that the bid-ask range proposed by the person conducting market making activities can be asymmetrical, that-is-to-say that it can be moved away from the central point of the market bid-ask range being posted for the relevant financial instrument. The competitiveness of the prices can therefore be different on bid and ask at a given time according to the directional side of its strategy, as long as the entity undertaking market making activities complies with the aim of providing liquidity to the market. In any case, the potential asymmetry should not result in either the bid or the ask price not being competitive.
48. Taking into account the above considerations, for shares qualifying as liquid shares under MiFID:
  - a. a regular and ongoing presence on the market would mean that market making activities should be undertaken either on a monthly or daily basis for at least 80% of the overall trading time. This time presence may be reduced in cases of abnormal market situations as defined under the rules of the relevant trading venue. For those MiFID liquid shares whose price is determined solely by auction on a trading venue, the concept of regular and ongoing time presence does not have a meaning comparable to that prevailing for those shares for which trading is carried out on a continuous basis. In such cases the regular and ongoing presence criterion should be assessed at least against the standards defined for recognised market makers/liquidity providers in the instruments by rules of the trading venue where the instrument is admitted to trading. To claim for the exemption for market making activities for these instruments, the person should issue competitive buy and sell orders during the pre-opening auction call phase such that their quotes are present when the auction concludes and the closing price for the instrument is determined.
  - b. Competitive prices should be within the maximum bid/offer spreads that are required from market makers/liquidity providers recognised under the rules of the trading venue

where they are posted for the concerned instruments. In cases where that trading venue does not provide for rules on maximum bid/offer spreads for recognised market makers or liquidity providers, reference can be made to the requirements laid down in the rules for recognised market makers/liquidity providers by another trading venue where the concerned instrument is actively traded. Where this alternative is not possible, as a last resort, competitive price should be measured as a proportion of the average spread observed on the concerned instrument in the venue where the instrument is traded. Any asymmetry between the prices of bids and offers is subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 47 above.

- c. The size of the orders posted by market makers on the order or quote book should not be smaller than those required from market makers/liquidity providers recognised under the rules of the trading venue where the shares concerned are traded. In cases where that trading venue does not provide for rules on order or quote size for recognised market makers or liquidity providers, reference can be made to the requirements laid down in the rules for recognised market makers/liquidity providers by another trading venue where the concerned instrument is actively traded. Where this alternative is not possible, as a last resort, the size of the orders or quotes issued in the market making capacity should be assessed in relation to the average trading size (ATS) for the concerned instrument.
49. For shares that do not qualify as liquid shares under MiFID and for equity derivatives traded on a trading venue:
- a. the requirement to have a regular and ongoing presence on the market should be assessed against the standards defined in the rules of the trading venue where the instrument is admitted to trading for recognised market makers/liquidity providers on such instruments.
  - b. Competitive prices should be within the maximum bid/offer spreads for market makers/liquidity providers as laid down by the trading venue. Any asymmetry between the prices of bids and offers is subject to the same conditions as set out in paragraph 47 above.
  - c. the size of the orders should not be significantly smaller than what is required from market makers/liquidity providers recognised under the trading venue rules where the concerned instruments are traded.

For non-liquid shares, where the trading venue referred to above does not provide for rules on one of the criterion set out in b and c for recognised market makers or liquidity providers, reference can be made to the requirements laid down in the rules for recognised market makers/liquidity providers by another trading venue where the concerned instrument is actively traded.

Where such an alternative is not possible, as a last resort and depending on the concerned criteria:

- competitive prices should be measured as a proportion of the average spread observed on the concerned instrument in the venue where the instrument is traded or ultimately should be within the maximum bid/offer spreads laid down by the trading venue;

- the size of the orders or quotes issued in the market making capacity should be assessed in relation to the average trading size (ATS) for the concerned instrument on the venue where it is traded.

For equity derivatives, where the trading venue referred to above does not provide for rules on one of the criterion set out in a, b and c for recognised market makers or liquidity providers, reference can be made to the relevant requirements laid down in the rules for recognised market makers/liquidity providers by another trading venue where a similar derivative contract is actively traded, if any.

50. An entity may demonstrate that it meets these criteria by reference either, ex post, to historical trading or, ex ante, to trading it intends to conduct in the future.
51. ESMA proposes that competent authorities take the following approach towards assessment of notification of intent to make use of the exemption:
  - a. Where a person can demonstrate that it is party to a market making or liquidity provision contract or programme with a trading venue or an issuer which meets or exceeds the above three criteria there is a presumption that its notification should be accepted by the competent authority. It should be noted that regardless of being a party to the contract, the person should, nevertheless, fulfil relevant criteria under Article 2(1)(k), e.g. be a member of a trading venue, deal as principal, etc.;
  - b. Where a person is not party to a contract or programme as described above it should provide evidence that it meets the criteria set out above and the other requirements laid down by Article 2(1)(k).
52. Further, the notifying person should be in a position to provide additional information or evidence upon ad-hoc request from the competent authority. In particular:
  - a. Evidence of comparable size of orders;
  - b. Evidence of competitive prices of orders;
  - c. Evidence of regular and ongoing presence on the market.

**VIII.III. Principles and qualifying criteria that should apply when dealing “as part of its usual business, by fulfilling orders initiated by clients or in response to clients' requests to trade” (Article 2(1)(k)(ii))**

53. In addition to the general principles set out in paragraph 4343, for dealing as a principal when fulfilling clients' orders or responding to clients' requests to constitute market making activities for the purposes of the Regulation, a person must demonstrate to the competent authority that it is an investment firm, credit institution, a third country entity or a firm as referred to in point (l) of Article 2(1) of Directive 2004/39/EC and that such dealing is and will be part of its 'usual business'.
54. To qualify for the exemption under this capacity market makers must
  - a. undertake regular provision of prices to clients or maintain the ability to provide a quote in response to client demand; and

- b. stand ready to trade with clients upon request.

55. As such, the competent authority will take into account issues including:

- Whether, and to what extent, the person already deals on a frequent and systematic basis in the financial instrument in question when fulfilling client orders or responding to clients' requests. If the market making activity is performed in instruments that are traded on an ad-hoc and infrequent basis it is decisive if the market-maker is at all business times ready and prepared to provide prices to clients and stands ready to trade in response to client's request with a reasonable expectation to trade in any instrument requested by a client. These have to be in advance defined instruments or categories of instruments, e.g. the main indices or instruments of regulated market. Presentation of the underlying business strategy could be used as a relevant evidence to support eligibility of once activity under Article 2(1)(k)(ii) for exemption;
- The scale of activity (for which the exemption is notified) in comparison to overall proprietary trading of the person;
- Where the person does not yet deal on a frequent and systematic basis in the financial instrument in question to fulfil client orders or to respond to clients' requests:

whether it has a reasonable expectation that it will do so in the future, and the basis for that expectation and the business assumptions that justify it (including in relation to its dealing for clients in other financial instruments). Reasonable expectation of dealing in a particular financial instrument can be referred to in a notification to CAs.

#### **VIII.IV. Anticipatory hedging under Article 2(1)(k)(iii)**

- 56. An entity dealing as principal in anticipation of client orders or requests expected to materialise in the near term can benefit from the market making exemption to the extent that the anticipated hedging is necessary for the performance of actual market making activities and is not carried out on other grounds, such as speculative. Should the anticipated client's order or request to quote not be received, the position accumulated through anticipated hedging should be unwound in an expeditious and orderly manner (and in any event as soon as practicable).
- 57. The market maker must be able to demonstrate that trading in anticipation of clients request correlates with transactions carried out in performance of market making activities at any time.

#### **IX. Exemption process**

- 58. The use of the exemption under the Regulation is based on the requirement for notification of the intent. It is not an authorisation or licensing process. However, the notified competent authority may prohibit the use of the exemption, either at the time of the notification or subsequently, if it considers that the conditions of the exemption are no longer fulfilled.
- 59. Considering the wide geographical scope of the exemption for a specific financial instrument and the potential impact on the European markets, the single competent authority which receives the notification for that instrument is accountable for its decision as to whether or not to prohibit its use.

60. Besides, according to the Regulation, the onus for prohibiting the use of the exemption is on the competent authority that was notified. Therefore, ESMA considers that any decision by that competent authority to refuse the benefit of the exemption to a person should be justified and made in writing.
61. Depending on national laws and regulations and though not required by the Regulation, a competent authority which is notified of the intent to use an exemption may formally respond to the notifying person that it does not object to the use of that exemption.
62. In this context, it is therefore crucial to have a harmonised application of the provisions of the Regulation relating to (a) the notification of the intent to use the exemption, (b) its content, (c) the approach to processing notifications received by relevant competent authorities and (d) the approach to assessing conditions of the exemption which may result in the decision by a competent authority to prohibit its use of exemption, including the criteria to consider, whether it be at the time of the initial notification or subsequently.

### **Notification of intent**

63. The common approach to requirements for information provided in the notification of the intent to use the exemption should be balanced so as to ensure that competent authorities are provided sufficient information. This information should allow them to implement an efficient notification assessment process and at the same time avoid imposing disproportionate notification requirements on persons intending to make use of the exemption.
64. The notification has to be submitted to the relevant competent authority in electronic format, in accordance with the template provided in Annex I and II, in the language(s) accepted by the competent authority in that Member State and be confirmed in writing if required under the legal and regulatory framework of that Member State. Should additional accompanying documents be provided, they can be submitted in a language which is customary in the sphere of international finance.
65. Depending on the type of exemption (Authorised Primary Dealers or Market Making activities), the notifying entity should provide the following information:
  - a. For Authorised Primary Dealers:
    - i. Details of the notifying party;
    - ii. Details of the contact person within the notifying party;
    - iii. Copy of the agreement/recognition signed with a sovereign issuer or a person acting on its behalf.
  - b. For market making activities:
    - iv. Details of the notifying party;
    - v. Details of the contact person within the notifying party;
    - vi. Status of the notifying party;

1. Credit institution;
  2. Investment firm;
  3. Third country entity; or
  4. Firm as referred to in point (l) of Article 2(1) of Directive 2004/39/EC.
- vii. Market of which the notifying person is a member;
- viii. A description of the activities specifying particular capacity according to Article 2(1)(k) of the Regulation:
1. Capacity under Article 2(1)(k)(i);
  2. Capacity under Article 2(1)(k)(ii) and the nature of client facilitation services:
    - a. Fulfilling orders initiated by clients;
    - b. Responding to clients' requests to trade.
- ix. For each capacity, the financial instrument(s) for which the intent to use the exemption is notified. It can take the form of a list of individual financial instruments or a clear specification of the instruments concerned (e.g. FTSE 100 on particular date), provided that it results in a closed list of specific instruments and allows the notified competent authority to unambiguously identify all individual instruments for which the exemption is declared;
- x. In case of existing contractual agreement for provision of market making services – description of the main duties and activities under the contract or a copy of the contract;
- xi. Where the market making activities are carried out on instruments referred to in paragraph 30, e.g. ETFs, listed derivatives, etc. – the corresponding category of financial instruments according to Section C Annex I of MiFID, e.g. category 3 – units in collective investment undertakings;
- xii. Where no previous market making activity in a particular financial instrument can be demonstrated (e.g. IPO, intention to start a new market making business in a new financial instrument, etc.):
1. For market making activities under Article 2(1)(k)(i) capacity – indication of expected daily volumes of market making activities in a financial instrument;
  2. For market making activities under Article 2(1)(k)(ii) capacity – indication of expected weekly volumes of market making activities in a financial instrument.

66. For the authorised primary dealer or market making activities exemption, the status of the notifying party (investment firm, credit institution, market member) is a condition that should be clearly assessed and cross-checked on the basis of the evidence to be provided by the notifying entity.
67. It should be noted that such an assessment may be more complex for third country entities: beyond ensuring that the third country market of the applicant is declared equivalent, cooperation and exchange of information with third country regulators may be necessary and will be carried out according to provision of Article 38 of the Regulation.

### **Monitoring of the conditions of the exemption**

68. In accordance with Article 17(9) and 17(10) a person who has given a notification under paragraphs 5 or 6 of Article 17 shall as soon as possible notify in writing the relevant competent authority where there are any changes affecting that persons eligibility to use the exemption. In light of the notified changes, the competent authority shall assess within two weeks whether the relevant activities still qualify for the exemption.
69. As part of common supervisory approaches and practices, competent authorities might on their own initiative carry out thematic reviews to verify at any time whether activities of the natural or legal person satisfy the conditions of exemption.

### **Specific situation of emergency measures**

70. When in exceptional circumstances a competent authority is introducing a temporary measure exercising its powers under Chapter V Section 1 of the Regulation that goes beyond the regular regime, it may decide to exempt market making activities or primary dealing activities from the measures. This is a discretionary power left to the authority introducing the measure. In particular, the competent authority might exercise a certain level of discretion when providing for such exemption. Without prejudice to further exceptions being specified by a competent authority, when an exception applies to market making activities, the latter should be understood as defined in the Regulation.

### **Cooperation between competent authorities**

71. As provided for in the Regulation the exemption is granted by the relevant competent authority of the notifying person and, for a third country entity, the competent authority of the trading venue where most of its trading takes place) and it must be accepted throughout the Union.
72. However it is possible that for certain financial instruments the local authority of the market (which is the host authority for the notifying person) may receive more comprehensive data in order to verify the actual performance of market making activities for which the person is exempted. Namely, while performing a day-to-day supervisory function of the trading activities on the local market, the host authority might come across evidence of suspected non-compliance with the conditions for exemption for market making activities by a particular person. In such a case the host authority will submit relevant evidence to the home authority.
73. The home competent authority, having considered and analysed the evidence provided, shall undertake further cooperation in accordance with Articles 35 and 37 of the Regulation.

74. Disagreements between the competent authorities shall be settled according to provisions in Article 19 of the ESMA Regulation (EU) No 1095/2010.

#### **X. Transitory measures**

75. According to Article 17(14) of the Regulation notification to a competent authority may be made at any time within sixty calendar days before 1 November 2012. Nevertheless, notifications made before entry into force of the Guidelines and not in compliance with requirements set herein shall be reviewed and assessed against the provisions contained in the Guidelines within 6 months after application of the Guidelines.
76. It should be noted that the Regulation does not contain a grandfathering clause for market making exemptions granted before its application. Therefore, entities whose activities were exempted from national short selling regimes before the Regulation became applicable should notify the relevant competent authorities in writing of their intention to make use of exemption under Article 17(1) of the Regulation.





## Annex I

### Notification of intent to make use of the exemption under Article 17(3) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps

<b>1</b>	<b>Details of NOTIFYING PARTY</b>	
a)	First name LAST NAME Full company name	
b)	BIC code (if the holder has one)	
c)	Country	
d)	Address	
<b>2</b>	<b>Contact person</b>	
a)	First name Last name	
b)	Phone number	
c)	Fax number	
d)	E-mail address	
<b>3</b>	<b>Financial Instrument</b>	
	Description of sovereign issuer of debt instrument (provide information in specific spreadsheet listing the sovereign issuer(s) in CSV format)	

Date, signature \_\_\_\_\_

#### IMPORTANT:

This notification form is only valid if submitted together with a copy of the agreement/recognition signed with a sovereign issuer or a person acting on its behalf

## Annex II

### Notification of intent to make use of exemption the under Article 17(1) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps

<b>1</b>	<b>Details of NOTIFYING PARTY</b>	
a)	First name LAST NAME Full company name	
b)	BIC code (if the holder has one)	
c)	Country	
d)	Address	
<b>2</b>	<b>Contact person</b>	
a)	First name Last name	
b)	Phone number	
c)	Fax number	
d)	E-mail address	

<b>3</b>	<b>Details of Market Making</b>	
a)	STATUS (of the notifying party (credit institution, investment firm, third country entity or firm as referred to in point (l) of Article 2(1) of Directive 2004/39/EC))	
b)	MARKET MEMBERSHIP (trading venue(s) where membership exists)	
c)	DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 2(1)(k) or INDICATION OF EXPECTED ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO ARTICLE 2(1)(k)	
d)	FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT (S) (provide information in specific spreadsheet in CSV format)	
	(i) INSTRUMENT (share, sovereign issuer of debt instrument, CDS)	
	(ii) CATEGORY OF INSTRUMENT on which market making activities are conducted, only when different from (i) (by designation of the financial instrument/ underlying)	
e)	DESCRIPTION OF CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT (main duties and activities)	



Date, signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Annex III

## Format of the spreadsheet (csv file) to use together with the forms for the notification of intent to make use of exemption the under Article 17(1) and 17(3) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2012 of the European Parliament and the Council of 14 March 2012 on short selling and certain aspects of Credit Default Swaps

**Name of the informing competent authority:**

**Name of the notifying person:**

**ID code\* (e.g. BIC):**


\*please specify what code is provided if not BIC

#### For shares

No	ISIN	Name of the issuer	Market Membership (for Art. 17(1))
1			
2			
3			
4			
...			

#### For sovereign bonds

No	Name of the sovereign issuer	Market Membership (Art. 17(1))
1		
2		

		
	4	
	...	

**For sovereign CDS**

No	Name of the sovereign issuer	Market Membership (Art. 17(1))
1		
2		
3		
4		
...		

**For instruments other than shares, sovereign debt instruments or sovereign CDS that create short or long position**

No	Category (part C, annex I of directive 2004/39/EU)	Underlying financial instrument
1		
2		
3		
4		
...		