Chapter 23

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/583

[redacted]

Preamble

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) No 600/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on markets in financial instruments and amending Regulation (EU) No 648/2012, and in particular Article 1(8), Article 9(5), Article 11(4), Article 21(5) and Article 22(4) thereof,

01/01/2021

Whereas:

(1) A high degree of transparency is essential to ensure that investors are adequately informed as to the true level of actual and potential transactions in bonds, structured finance products, emission allowances and derivatives irrespective of whether those transactions take place on regulated markets, multilateral trading facilities (MTFs), organised trading facilities, systematic internalisers, or outside those facilities. This high degree of transparency should also establish a level playing field between trading venues so that the price discovery process in respect of particular financial instruments is not impaired by the fragmentation of liquidity, and investors are not thereby penalised.

(2) At the same time, it is essential to recognise that there may be circumstances where exemptions from pre-trade transparency or deferrals of post-trade transparency obligations should be provided to avoid the impairment of liquidity as an unintended consequence of obligations to disclose transactions and thereby to make public risk positions. Therefore, it is appropriate to specify the precise circumstances under which waivers from pre-trade transparency and deferrals from post-trade transparency may be granted.

(3) The provisions in this Regulation are closely linked, since they deal with specifying the pre-trade and post-trade transparency requirements that apply to trading in non-equity financial instruments. To ensure coherence between those provisions, which should enter into force at the same time, and to facilitate a comprehensive view for stakeholders and, in particular, those subject to the obligations, it is necessary to include these regulatory technical standards in a single Regulation.

(4) Where competent authorities grant waivers in relation to pre-trade transparency requirements or authorise the deferral of post-trade transparency obligations, they should

treat all regulated markets, multilateral trading facilities, organised trading facilities and investment firms trading outside of trading venues equally and in a non-discriminatory manner.

(5) It is appropriate to clarify a limited number of technical terms. Those technical definitions are necessary to ensure the uniform application in the Union of the provisions contained in this Regulation and, hence, contribute to the establishment of a single rulebook for Union financial markets. Those definitions serve only for the purpose of setting out the transparency obligations for non-equity financial instruments and should be strictly limited to understanding this Regulation.

(6) Exchange-traded-commodities (ETCs) and exchange-traded notes (ETNs) subject to this Regulation should be considered as debt instruments due to their legal structure. However, since they are traded in a similar fashion to ETFs, a similar transparency regime as that of ETFs should be applied.

(7) In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 600/2014, a number of instruments should be considered to be eligible for a pre-trade transparency waiver for instruments for which there is not a liquid market. This requirement should also apply to derivatives subject to the clearing obligation which are not subject to the trading obligation as well as bonds, derivatives, structured finance products and emission allowances which are not liquid.

(8) A trading venue operating a request for quote system should make public the firm bid and offer prices or actionable indications of interest and the depth attached to those prices no later than at the time when the requester is able to execute a transaction under the system's rules. This is to ensure that members or participants who are providing their quotes to the requester first are not put at a disadvantage.

(9) The majority of liquid covered bonds are mortgage bonds issued to grant loans for financing private individuals' purchase of a home and the average value of which is directly related to the value of the loan. In the covered bond market, liquidity providers ensure that professional investors trading in large sizes are matched with home owners trading in small sizes. To avoid disruption of this function and contingent detrimental consequences for home owners, the size specific to the instrument above which liquidity providers may benefit from a pre-trade transparency waiver should be set at a the trade size below which lie 40 percent of the transactions since this trade size is deemed reflective of the average price of a home.

(10) Information which is required to be made available as close to real time as possible should be made available as instantaneously as technically feasible, assuming a reasonable level of efficiency and of expenditure on systems on the part of the market operator, approved publication arrangement (APA) or investment firm concerned. The information should only be published close to the prescribed maximum time limit in exceptional cases where the systems available do not allow for a publication in a shorter period of time.

(11) Investment firms should make public the details of transactions executed outside a trading venue through an APA. This Regulation should set out the way investment firms report their transactions to APAs and should apply in conjunction with Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/571.

(12) The possibility to specify the application of the obligation of post-trade disclosure of transactions executed between two investment firms, including systematic internal-

isers, in bonds, structured finance products, emission allowances and derivatives which are determined by factors other than the current market valuation, such as the transfer of financial instruments as collateral, is set out in Regulation (EU) No 600/2014. Such transactions do not contribute to the price discovery process or risk blurring the picture for investors or hinder best execution and therefore this Regulation specifies the transactions determined by factors other than the current market valuation which should not be made public.

(13) Investment firms often conduct, on own account or on behalf of clients, transactions in derivatives and other financial instruments or assets that are composed by a number of interlinked, contingent trades. Such package transactions enable investment firms and their clients to better manage their risks with the price of each component of the package transaction reflecting the overall risk profile of the package rather than the prevailing market price of each component. Package transactions can take various forms, such as exchange for physicals, trading strategies executed on trading venues or bespoke package transactions and it is important to take those specificities into account when calibrating the applicable transparency regime. It is therefore appropriate to specify for the purpose of this Regulation the conditions for applying deferrals from post-trade transparency to package transactions. Such arrangements should not be available for transactions which hedge financial instruments conducted in the normal course of the business.

(14) Exchange for physicals are an integral part of financial markets, allowing market participants to organise and execute exchange-traded derivatives transactions which are linked directly to a transaction in the underlying physical market. They are widely used and they involve a multitude of actors, such as farmers, producers, manufacturers and processors of commodities. Typically an exchange for physical transaction will take place when a seller of a physical asset seeks to close out his corresponding hedging position in a derivative contract with the buyer of the physical asset, when the latter happens to also hold a corresponding hedge in the same derivative contract. They therefore facilitate the efficient closing out of hedging positions which are not necessary anymore.

(15) In respect of transactions executed outside the rules of a trading venue, it is essential to clarify which investment firm is to make public a transaction in cases where both parties to the transaction are investment firms established in the Union in order to ensure the publication of transactions without duplication. Therefore, the responsibility to make a transaction public should always fall on the selling investment firm unless only one of the counterparties is a systematic internaliser and it is the buying firm.

(16) Where only one of the counterparties is a systematic internaliser in a given financial instrument and it is also the buying firm for that instrument, it should be responsible for making the transaction public as its clients would expect it to do so and it is better placed to fill in the reporting field mentioning its status of systematic internaliser. To ensure that a transaction is only published once, the systematic internaliser should inform the other party that it is making the transaction public.

(17) It is important to maintain current standards for the publication of transactions carried out as back-to-back trades to avoid the publication of a single transaction as multiple trades and to provide legal certainty on which investment firm is responsible for publishing a transaction. Therefore, two matching trades entered at the same time and for the same price with a single party interposed should be published as a single transaction.

(18) Regulation (EU) No 600/2014 allows competent authorities to require the publication of supplementary details when publishing information benefitting from a deferral, or to allow deferrals for an extended time period. In order to contribute to the uniform

application of these provisions across the Union, it is necessary to frame the conditions and criteria under which supplementary deferrals may be allowed by competent authorities.

(19) Trading in many non-equity financial instruments, and in particular derivatives, is episodic, variable and subject to regular modifications of trading patterns. Static determinations of financial instruments which do not have a liquid market and static determinations of the various thresholds for the purpose of calibrating pre-trade and post-trade transparency obligations without providing for the possibility to adapt the liquidity status and the thresholds in light of changes in trading patterns would therefore not be suitable. It is therefore appropriate to set out the methodology and parameters which are necessary to perform the liquidity assessment and the calculation of the thresholds for the application of pre-trade transparency waivers and deferral of post-trade transparency on a periodic basis.

(20) In order to ensure consistent application of the waivers to pre-trade transparency and the post-trade deferrals, it is necessary to create uniform rules regarding the content and frequency of data competent authorities may request from trading venues, APAs and consolidated tape providers (CTPs) for transparency purposes. It is also necessary to specify the methodology for calculating the respective thresholds and to create uniform rules with regard to publishing the information across the Union. Rules on the specific methodology and data necessary to perform calculations for the purpose of specifying the transparency regime applicable to non-equity financial instruments should be applied in conjunction with Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/577 which sets out the common elements with regard to the content and frequency of data requests to be addressed to trading venues, APAs and CTPs for the purposes of transparency and other calculations in more general terms.

(21) For bonds other than ETCs and ETNs, transactions below EUR 100000 should be excluded from the calculations of pre-trade and post-trade transparency thresholds, as those are considered to be of a retail size. Those retail-sized transactions should in all cases benefit from the new transparency regime and any threshold giving rise to a waiver or deferral from transparency should be set above that level.

(22) The purpose of the exemption from transparency obligations set out in Regulation (EU) No 600/2014 is to ensure that the effectiveness of operations conducted by the Eurosystem in the performance of primary tasks as set out in the Statute of the European System of Central Banks and of the European Central Bank annexed to the Treaty on the European Union ("the Statute"), and under equivalent national provisions for members of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) in Member States whose currency is not the euro, which relies on timely and confidential transactions, is not compromised by the disclosure of information on such transactions. It is crucial for central banks to be able to control whether, when and how information about their actions is disclosed so as to maximise the intended impact and limit any unintended impact on the market. Therefore, legal certainty should be provided for the members of the ESCB and their respective counterparties as to the scope of the exemption from transparency requirements.

(23) One of the primary ESCB responsibilities under the Treaty and the Statute and under equivalent national provisions for members of the ESCB in Member States whose currency is not the euro, is the performance of foreign exchange policy, which entails holding and managing foreign reserves to ensure that, whenever necessary, there is a sufficient amount of liquid resources available for its foreign exchange policy operations. The application of transparency requirements to foreign reserve management operations may result in unintended signals to the market, which could interfere with the foreign exchange policy of the Eurosystem and of members of the ESCB in Member States whose

currency is not the euro. Similar considerations may also apply to foreign reserve management operations in the performance of monetary and financial stability policy on a case-by-case basis.

(24) The exemption from transparency obligations for transactions where the counterparty is a member of the ESCB should not apply in respect of transactions entered into by any member of the ESCB in performance of their investment operations. This should include operations conducted for administrative purposes or for the staff of the member of the ESCB, including transactions conducted in the capacity as an administrator of a pension scheme in accordance with Article 24 of the Statute.

(25) The temporary suspension of transparency obligations should only be imposed in exceptional situations which represent a significant decline in liquidity across a class of financial instruments based on objective and measurable factors. It is necessary to differentiate between classes initially determined as having or not having a liquid market as a further significant decline in relative terms in a class already determined as illiquid is likely to occur more easily. Therefore, a suspension of transparency requirements in instruments determined as not having a liquid market should be imposed only if a decline by a higher relative threshold has occurred.

(26) The pre-trade and post-trade transparency regime established by Regulation (EU) No 600/2014 should be appropriately calibrated to the market and applied in a uniform manner throughout the Union. It is therefore essential to lay down the necessary calculations to be performed, including the periods and methods of calculation. In this respect, to avoid market distorting effects, the calculation periods specified in this Regulation should ensure that the relevant thresholds of the regime are updated at appropriate intervals to reflect market conditions. It is also appropriate to provide for the centralised publication of the results of the calculations so that they are made available to all financial market participants and competent authorities in the Union in a single place and in a user-friendly manner. To that end, competent authorities should notify ESMA of the results of their calculations and ESMA should publish those calculations on its website.

(27) In order to ensure a smooth implementation of the new transparency requirements, it is appropriate to phase-in the transparency provisions. The liquidity threshold 'average daily number of trades' used for the determination of bonds for which there is a liquid market should be adapted in a gradual manner.

(28) By 30 July of the year following the date of application of Regulation (EU) No 600/2014, ESMA should, on an annual basis, submit to the Commission an assessment of the liquidity threshold determining the pre-trade transparency obligations pursuant to Articles 8 and 9 of Regulation (EU) No 600/2014, and, where appropriate, submit a revised regulatory technical standard in order to adapt the liquidity threshold.

(29) Likewise, the trade percentiles used to determine the size specific to the instrument which allow for the pre-trade transparency obligations for non-equity instruments to be waived, should be gradually adapted.

(30) For this purpose, ESMA should, on an annual basis, submit to the Commission an assessment of the waiver thresholds and, where appropriate, submit a revised regulatory standard to adapt the waiver thresholds applicable to non-equity instruments.

(31) For the purpose of the transparency calculations, reference data is necessary to determine the sub-asset class to which each financial instrument belongs. Therefore, it is necessary to require trading venues to provide additional reference data to that required by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/585.

(32) In the determination of financial instruments not having a liquid market in relation to foreign exchange derivatives, a qualitative assessment was required due to the lack of data necessary for a comprehensive quantitative analysis of the entire market. As a result, until data of better quality is available, foreign exchange derivatives should be considered not to have a liquid market for the purposes of this Regulation.

(33) With a view to allowing for an effective start of the new transparency rules data should be provided by market participants for the calculation and publication of the financial instruments for which there is not a liquid market and the sizes of orders that are large in scale or above the size specific to the instrument sufficiently in advance of the date of application of Regulation (EU) No 600/2014.

(34) For reasons of consistency and in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the financial markets, it is necessary that this Regulation and the provisions laid down in Regulation (EU) No 600/2014 apply from the same date. However, to ensure that the new transparency regulatory regime can operate effectively, certain provisions of this regulation should apply from the date of its entry into force.

(35) This Regulation is based on the draft regulatory technical standards submitted by ESMA to the Commission.

(36) ESMA has conducted open public consultations on the draft regulatory technical standards on which this Regulation is based, analysed the potential related costs and benefits and requested the opinion of the Securities and Markets Stakeholder Group established by Article 37 of Regulation (EU) No 1095/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION: