

Money Market Report for the week ending 21 August 2020

ECB Decisions

In view of continuing improvements in US dollar funding conditions and the low demand at recent 7-day maturity US dollar liquidity-providing operations, the Bank of England, the Bank of Japan, the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Swiss National Bank, in consultation with the Federal Reserve, have jointly decided to further reduce the frequency of their 7-day operations from three times per week to once per week. This operational change will be effective as of 1 September 2020. At the same time, these central banks will continue to hold weekly operations with an 84-day maturity.

These central banks stand ready to re-adjust the provision of US dollar liquidity as warranted by market conditions. The swap lines among these central banks are available standing facilities and serve as an important liquidity backstop to ease strains in global funding markets, thereby helping to mitigate the effects of such strains on the supply of credit to households and businesses, both domestically and abroad.

ECB Monetary Operations

On 17 August 2020, the ECB announced a 7-day Main Refinancing Operation (MRO). The operation was conducted on 18 August 2020, and attracted bids from euro area eligible counterparties of €1.33 billion, €0.33 billion more than the bid amount of the previous week. The amount was allotted in full at a fixed rate equivalent to the prevailing MRO rate of 0.00%, in accordance with current ECB policy.

On 19 August 2020, the ECB conducted an 84-day US dollar funding operation through collateralised lending in conjunction with the US Federal Reserve. This operation attracted bids of \$0.24 billion, which was allotted in full at a fixed rate of 0.33%.

During the week under review, the ECB conducted three 7-day US dollar funding operations through collateralised lending in conjunction with the US Federal Reserve. These operations attracted total bids of \$0.04 billion, at the rate of 0.34%.

Domestic Treasury Bill Market

In the domestic primary market for Treasury bills, the Treasury invited tenders for 91-day bills and 182-day bills for settlement value 20 August 2020, maturing on 19 November 2020 and 18 February 2021, respectively. Bids of €99.00 million were submitted for the 91-day bills, with the Treasury accepting €22.00 million, while bids of €101.00 million were submitted for the 182-day bills, with the Treasury accepting €10.00 million. Since €40.00 million worth of bills matured during the week, the outstanding balance of Treasury bills decreased by €8.00 million, standing at €804.00 million.

The yield from the 91-day bill auction was -0.480%, an increase of 0.4 basis point from bids with a similar tenor issued on 13 August 2020, representing a bid price of €100.1215 per €100 nominal. The yield from the 182-day bill auction was -0.479%, a decrease of 2.0 basis points from bids with a similar tenor also issued on 30 July 2020, representing a bid price of €100.2427 per €100 nominal.

During the week under review, there was no trading on the Malta Stock Exchange.

This week the Treasury will invite tenders for 91-day bills and 273-day bills maturing on 26 November 2020 and 27 May 2021, respectively.