



FTSE MTS Highest Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index Series

v2.3



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Section 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The FTSE MTS Index Structure

1.1.1 FTSE MTS Indexes are a set of benchmarks for the European sovereign bond market. The indexes are calculated and distributed by FTSE Russell, using pricing data from the MTS platform. All quotes made on the consolidated inter-dealer platform are live and tradable to member dealers. Additionally, market data from the order book is widely distributed via data vendors.

1.2 IOSCO

1.2.1 FTSE International Limited (FTSE) considers that the FTSE MTS Highest Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index Series (the Index Series) meets the IOSCO Principles for Financial Benchmarks as published in July 2013.

1.3 FTSE Russell hereby notifies users of the index that it is possible that circumstances, including external events beyond the control of FTSE Russell, may necessitate changes to, or the cessation of, the index and therefore, any financial contracts or other financial instruments that reference the index or investment funds which use the index to measure their performance should be able to withstand, or otherwise address the possibility of changes to, or cessation of, the index.

1.4 Index users who choose to follow this index or to buy products that claim to follow this index should assess the merits of the index's rules-based methodology and take independent investment advice before investing their own or client funds. No liability whether as a result of negligence or otherwise is accepted by FTSE Russell nor its group companies (or any person concerned with the preparation or publication of these Ground Rules) for any losses, damages, claims and expenses suffered by any person as a result of:

- any reliance on these Ground Rules, and/or
- any errors or inaccuracies in these Ground Rules, and/or
- any non-application or misapplication of the policies or procedures described in these Ground Rules, and/or
- any errors or inaccuracies in the compilation of the Index or any constituent data in the

1.5 These Ground Rules

1.5.1 This document sets out the Ground Rules for the construction and management of the FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Indexes.

1.6 FTSE Russell

FTSE Russell is a trading name of FTSE International Limited, Frank Russell Company, FTSE Global Debt Capital Markets Limited (and its subsidiaries FTSE Global Debt Capital Markets Inc. and MTSNext Limited), Mergent, Inc., FTSE Fixed Income LLC and The Yield Book Inc.

1.7 Index Series Objectives

- 1.7.1 The FTSE MTS Highest Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index Series includes both the FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Indexes and the FTSE MTS Lowest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Indexes. The indexes are designed to be a measure of the Eurozone Government Bond market. They are transparent indexes, and are designed to be replicable with individual security holdings and prices disclosed electronically each day.

1.8 Publication of Index and Underlying Data

- 1.8.1 FTSE MTS Indexes are published in real time between 09:00 CET and 17:15 CET, with three snapshots at 11:00 CET, 16:00 CET and 17:15 CET. Bond prices used for the 11:00, 16:00 and 17:15 CET snapshots are published on the website. Real time bond prices directly from the MTS platform are available from data vendors. These bond prices are distributed with a higher frequency than the 30 second index updates. Underlying bond portfolio composition and weights are also published on the FTSE MTS Index website.

- 1.9 The base currency of the benchmark is EUR.

1.10 FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Indexes

- 1.10.1 The FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Indexes are a family of Eurozone sovereign indexes grouped by maturity range and based on issuers with the highest credit ratings. The pan-eurozone indexes (together with their maturity sub-indexes) were launched in October 2009 and each index has a history of index values back to 31 December 1998.

Also included in the index series are the FTSE MTS Lowest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index and the FTSE MTS Lowest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond IG Index – two all-maturity Eurozone sovereign indexes based on issuers with two or more credit ratings below the highest level. For the investment grade version, only bonds from Eurozone issuers with at least two investment grade ratings from the three main credit ratings agencies become Eligible Bonds.

The constituents of the indexes are based on the same Eligible Bonds used for the FTSE MTS Eurozone Government Bond Indexes (ex-CNO Etrix) but, unlike those indexes, all Eligible Bonds are selected without restriction. A list of sub-indexes is given in Appendix A.

1.11 Price and Total Return indexes

1.11.1 Price and Total Return indexes are calculated.

1.11.2 Total Return Index: Coupons paid out on any bond in an index portfolio are reinvested overnight in the index itself. No deduction is made to a coupon before it is reinvested in the index i.e. no withholding tax is applied.

1.12 Index Analytics

1.12.1 In addition to the Capital Index and Total Return Index, the following index analytics are also calculated:

- Average Coupon
- Average Yield to Maturity
- Average Time to Maturity
- Average Macaulay Duration
- Average Modified Duration
- Average Convexity



Section 2

Management Responsibilities

2.0 Management Responsibilities

2.1 FTSE International Limited (FTSE)

2.1.1 FTSE is the benchmark administrator of the index series.

2.1.2 FTSE Russell is responsible for the daily calculation, production and operation of the FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index Series and will:

- maintain records of all the constituents;
- be responsible for the addition and deletion of bonds and changes of nominal amounts, in accordance with the Ground Rules.

2.2 FTSE EMEA Fixed Income Advisory Committee

2.2.1 The FTSE EMEA Fixed Income Advisory Committee has been established by FTSE Russell. The Committee may recommend changes to the Ground Rules for approval by the FTSE Russell Product Governance Board.

2.2.2 The Terms of Reference of the FTSE EMEA Fixed Income Indexes Advisory Committee are set out on the FTSE Russell website and can be accessed using the following link:

[FTSE EMEA Fixed Income Advisory Committee.pdf](#)

2.3 Amendments to these Ground Rules

2.3.1 These Ground Rules shall be subject to regular review (at least once a year) by FTSE Russell to ensure that they continue to meet the current and future requirements of investors and other index users. Any proposals for significant amendments to these Ground Rules will be subject to consultation with the FTSE EMEA Fixed Income Advisory Committee and other stakeholders if appropriate. The feedback from these consultations will be considered by the FTSE Russell Product Governance Board before approval is granted.

2.3.2 As provided for in the Statement of Principles for FTSE Fixed Income Indexes, where FTSE Russell determines that the Ground Rules are silent or do not specifically and unambiguously apply to the subject matter of any decision, any decision shall be based as far as practical on the Statement of Principles. After making any such determination, FTSE Russell shall advise the market of its decision at the earliest opportunity. Any such treatment will not be considered as an exception or change to the Ground Rules, or to set a precedent for future action, but FTSE Russell will consider whether the Rules should subsequently be updated to provide greater clarity.

2.4 Market Disruption

- 2.4.1 If the value of one or more constituents is not published due to a suspension or a market disruption event, the index will be calculated taking the latest intra-day value, if available. If an intra-day value is unavailable the previous end of day value will be used.

2.5 Interruption of Live Pricing from MTS Platform

- 2.5.1 The FTSE MTS Indexes are calculated based on executable bids and offers sourced from the MTS inter-dealer platform. The MTS platform is not controlled by FTSE Russell and should the platform be unable to disseminate live prices for any reason, the FTSE MTS Indexes will not be updated during that period. Index users who choose to follow the FTSE MTS Indexes should be aware of this possibility and make suitable contingency arrangements.



Section 3

FTSE Russell Index Policies

3.0 FTSE Russell Index Policies

These Ground Rules should be read in conjunction with the following policy documents which can be accessed using the links below:

3.1 Queries and Complaints

FTSE Russell's complaints procedure can be accessed using the following link:

[Benchmark Determination Complaints Handling Policy.pdf](#)

3.2 Guide to the Calculation Methods for the FTSE Fixed Income Indexes

3.2.1 For a description of the methodology used to calculate the index and bond level analytics, please consult the Guide to Calculation Methods for FTSE Fixed Income indexes, which can be found using the following link:

[FTSE Fixed Income Index Guide to Calculation.pdf](#)

3.3 Statement of Principles for FTSE Fixed Income Indexes (the Statement of Principles)

Indexes need to keep abreast of changing markets and the Ground Rules cannot anticipate every eventuality. Where the Ground Rules do not fully cover a specific event or development, FTSE Russell will determine the appropriate treatment by reference to the Statement of Principles for FTSE Fixed Income Indexes which summarises the ethos underlying FTSE Russell's approach to index construction. The Statement of Principles is reviewed annually and any changes proposed by FTSE Russell are presented to the FTSE Russell Policy Advisory Board for discussion before approval by the FTSE Russell Product Governance Board.

The Statement of Principles for Fixed Income Indexes can be accessed using the following link:

[Statement of Principles Fixed Income Indexes.pdf](#)

3.4 FTSE MTS Pricing Methodology Guide

3.4.1 For further information, please see the FTSE MTS Pricing Methodology Guide which is available using the following link:

[FTSE MTS Pricing Methodology Guide](#)

3.5 Recalculation Policy and Guidelines

The Recalculation Policy and Guidelines for Fixed Income Indexes document is available from the FTSE Russell website using the link below or by contacting info@ftserussell.com.

[Fixed Income Recalculation Policy and Guidelines.pdf](#)

3.6 Policy for Benchmark Methodology Changes

3.6.1 Details of FTSE Russell's policy for making benchmark methodology changes can be accessed using the following link:

[Policy for Benchmark Methodology Changes.pdf](#)



Section 4

Eligibility Criteria

4.0 Eligibility Criteria

4.1 Eligible Bonds

4.1.1 To be eligible for the Index Series, bonds must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Nominal, fixed coupon bullet-maturity bonds denominated in local currency and having no embedded options or convertibility
- Quoted on the MTS Platform
- Bonds must have a remaining time to maturity of 1 year
- Issued by the sovereign government of the following countries Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal and Spain
- A minimum outstanding amount of €2 billion,

4.1.2 For the FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index, bonds must have at least two AAA ratings from the three main credit rating agencies: Fitch, Moody's and S&P.

4.1.3 For the FTSE MTS Lowest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index, bonds must not be constituents of the FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Bond Index and have two or more ratings from the three main credit ratings agencies below the highest possible rating.

4.1.4 Additionally, for the FTSE MTS Lowest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond IG Index, the same criteria applies as in 3.1.3, but with additional requirement that the bonds must have at least two investment grade ratings from the three main rating agencies.

4.1.5 Where a credit rating downgrade for an eligible issuer(s) would lead to the number of eligible issuers falling below the minimum of five, the issuer(s) in question will remain in the index until a new issuer becomes eligible to replace it.

4.1.6 If an issuer becomes eligible for the FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index, and there are multiple issuers who are eligible to be replaced, the issuer with the lowest average rating will be removed.

4.2 Selection Criteria

All Eligible Bonds automatically become Selected Bonds.

The all-maturity FTSE MTS Highest-Rated Eurozone Government Bond index must comprise of a minimum of five issuers. Where a credit rating downgrade for an eligible issuer would lead to the number of eligible issuers falling below the minimum, the issuer in question will remain in the index until a new issuer becomes eligible to replace it. However this requirement does not apply to the maturity sub-indexes if there are an insufficient number of issuers with eligible bonds in that particular maturity bucket.

Section 5

Price Sources

5.0 Price Sources

5.1 FTSE MTS Indexes are priced using live quotes from the MTS inter-dealer platform. Each bond quoted on the MTS platform is supported by multiple dealers supplying continuous quotes. These quotes are widely distributed for information to the market via data vendors.

Index updates are calculated using best bid prices. New bonds entering the index for the first time use the best offer price, replicating the bid-offer spread experienced by a fund tracking the index. This applies to both the all-maturity and the individual maturity sub-indexes.

Selected indexes of each series are also available in mid-priced versions, where existing constituents are valued using mid prices. In order to replicate the bid-offer spread incurred when tracking the mid-index, new constituents enter the mid-priced index using their respective ask prices, and leave the index using their respective bid prices. The mid-price is calculated as the arithmetic average of the respective bid and offer price pair.

5.2 The prices used to update the indexes are taken from the MTS market real time. Prior to being used in the index calculation, the prices are subject to a multi-step verification process which aims to remove stale or off-market prices. The verification procedure includes:

- Comparing the bid and offer spreads against country thresholds
- Comparing price movements in individual bonds against pre-defined thresholds

Any price that successfully completes the verification process is referred to as the Last Good Price (LGP) and is subsequently used in the index calculation. In the event that the verification process disqualifies all prices for a particular bond the LGP is used, until a new price is available.

5.3 For further information, please see the FTSE MTS Pricing Methodology Guide which is available using the following link:

[FTSE MTS Pricing Methodology Guide](#)

Section 6

Index Rebalancing

6.0 Index Rebalancing

6.1 Monthly Rebalancing

6.1.1 FTSE MTS Indexes are rebalanced every calendar month. New selections for the index portfolios and their amounts are established using market data at 11:00 CET on the first day that is a TARGET business day and a MTS market trading day following the 15th day of the month prior to the effective date of the new selections (such business day being the “Selection Day”). The first settlement day of a bond following issuance must be on or before Selection Day in order for it to be eligible for the new monthly selections.

6.1.2 The monthly rebalance is effective at the open of the first business day of the month.

6.1.3 In the event that there are no Eligible Bonds available to be selected for a new monthly index portfolio, the current (populated) index portfolio is held constant until a new bond(s) becomes eligible.

6.2 Capping

6.2.1 The weighting of the countries in the in FTSE MTS Lowest-Rated Indexes is dependent on the number of countries which have eligible bonds.

6.2.2 If the number of countries is greater than or equal to 4, no country can have a weight in excess of 30% on the Selection Day. The weight of any country exceeding the limit will have its weight reduced, redistributing the excess weight proportionally to the remaining countries. This process is repeated until no country has a weight in excess of the cap.

6.2.3 If the number of countries falls below 4, the countries are equally weighted on the Selection Day.

6.2.4 Within each country, the weight of the individual bonds will remain proportional to their relative market value.



Appendix A: Further Information

A Glossary of Terms used in FTSE Russell's Ground Rule documents can be found using the following link:
[Fixed Income Glossary of Terms.pdf](#)

For further information on the FTSE MTS Highest Rated Eurozone Government Bond Index Ground Rules please visit www.ftse.com/products/mts or e-mail info@ftserussell.com.

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