



## Opening speech of the forum on the advantages of being listed: opportunities in the securities markets for companies

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Good morning.

I would like to start by thanking everyone attending today in person and online for your interest in these conferences.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the participants of the panels that make up the conference for their dedication to the coming sessions and, of course the BME group and, particularly, the Madrid Stock Exchange, for providing these facilities and everything necessary for us to hold this initiative.

I have very little time for everything I could say about the objective we are pursuing, which is none other than to raise awareness of the secondary stock market as an alternative for financing and establishing the value of companies.

When we published the objectives for 2022, there already was a reference in the section on strategic lines to the fact that one of them would be the promotion of capital markets as a source of financing for economic recovery.

We were specifically referring to the fact that, in the current situation, the European Union set economic recovery as a priority by promoting sustainable, digital, inclusive and resilient growth.

Said priority, in the current geopolitical and economic situation and threats to the economy, is more relevant than ever.

To this end, promoting the development of capital markets is essential, so as to enable companies, especially small and medium-sized ones, to diversify their sources of financing beyond the banking sector and thus contribute to economic recovery.

We mentioned in the objectives that the CNMV would continue to prioritise measures to make it easier for companies to raise funds from the markets, through the issue of equities or fixed income or the development of new ways of raising capital.

With such market promotion and with the aim of bringing the stock market closer to unlisted companies that may need capital in the coming years, several initiatives were to be promoted, one of which was the organisation of three information conferences to explain the steps, requirements and advantages of listing on the stock market through any of the available alternatives.

We started this initiative in Bilbao in June and went on to host a conference in Barcelona in November. Today's session in Madrid is the culmination of this series of conferences which we believe to be essential for the objective we are pursuing, and which will be attended, among others, by infrastructure managers, advisors, investors, financial intermediaries and listed companies.

Along with this initiative, I would like to briefly go over other measures that, with the goal of boosting our markets or facilitating access for issuers to the latter, have been created, either in Spain, promoted by the CNMV, or in Europe, promoted by the European Commission.

Regarding the CNMV, I would like to highlight a proposal, submitted to the government last year, to reduce the CNMV's supervisory fees to establish a better balance between income and expenses and to facilitate the competitiveness of the Spanish securities market by moderating the associated costs.

This proposal is made in addition to other measures implemented in recent years or to be implemented as a result of their inclusion in the draft securities market law currently being processed, namely referring to:

- 1) Years ago, the CNMV committed to reducing the processing periods of certain files.
- 2) Moreover, with the entry into force of Spanish Law 5/2021: i) the obligation to develop a prospectus for the issue of promissory notes with a term of less than 365 days was removed; ii) the obligation to send the issue document and any amendments thereto, used to represent the securities by book entries, to the CNMV was removed; and iii) the possibility of admitting shares from a capital increase to trading without the need for the deed of execution of the increase to be registered in the Companies Registry was authorised.
- 3) Recently (in December 2022), the CNMV communicated the flexibility in documents to be submitted related to the offer and admission to trading files by deleting or reducing such documentation.
- 4) Lastly, the Spanish Securities Market Law draft, still being processed, provides for the verification of admissions to trading of non-equity securities to be carried out only by market authorities without the CNMV being involved, which will reduce administrative costs as well as the associated economic burdens.

It is also worth highlighting that the draft Spanish Securities Market Law includes changes to the Spanish Corporate Enterprises Law that considers the figure of SPACs, making room for different vehicles to facilitate companies' access to the markets.

Additionally, the European Commission's initiative to streamline and stimulate the listing of more European companies on the stock exchange and reduce certain burdens once they are listed, known as the "Listing Act", was published a few weeks ago. We consider that such a proposal is, in general, very appropriate, as it manages the main elements to attract more companies to the market. In such approval process, all views are welcome, which is why we encourage you to participate in the debate.

Going back to the conferences, we hope that they will lead to companies' initiatives to be listed on markets that are currently authorised in Spain, whether in the Stock Exchange or growth or alternative markets such as BME Growth. Both markets have important differences, but they share a common pattern: transparency and liquidity of the companies admitted to all of them.

The latter is the perfect steppingstone for entities to access Stock Exchanges and, therefore, the primary market and, of course, an excellent opportunity to be able to grow and finance such growth with equity operations, given that at this juncture of high interest rates, bank financing may be less attractive.

I mentioned a few times that there have been very positive experiences in the transition from the Growth market to the continuous market, such as the companies Masmovil, Atrys and Grenergy, some of which we will be able to listen to on such transition.

In today's three roundtables, speakers will try to explain the experiences in the process of going public, the first one will address the role of the stock exchange as an alternative for the financing of companies, we will also have a second panel that will explain in detail the CNMV's approval process as a previous step to have the admission to the continuous market, and, lastly, a roundtable that will focus on the alternative market of the stock exchange, BME Growth, and the experiences of listed companies, registered advisors and investors.

I am sure that the high-end speakers we have in the panels and their experiences will gain your attention to be attracted to the equity market, as well as the bond market, where there are markets for this other type of financing that are perfectly comparable to other European markets.

I would like to thank you, once again, for following these conferences and if there are any questions at the end of each roundtable, time permitting, they can be made to the speakers. To those attending online, they will have a form they can submit, while those attending in person have cards where they can write any questions.

Without further ado, I hand the floor to Pedro Pasquín, CEO - Vice-Chair of Investment Banking in Europe at Lazard, as coordinator of the first roundtable.