EQUITA GROUP

Buy (maintained)

Company report

13 November 2020 – 5:30 PM

MARKET PRICE: EUR2.35

TARGET PRICE: EUR3.13 (from EUR3.04)

Investment Banking

Data	
Shares Outstanding (m):	45.5
Market Cap. (EURm):	107.2
Enterprise Value (EURm):	NA
Free Float (%):	37.0%
Av. Daily Trad. Vol. ('000):	54.0
Main Shareholder:	Management 53.9%
Reuters/Bloomberg:	EQUI.MI EQUI IM
52-Week Range (EUR)	1.9 3.0
Source: FactSet, UBI Banca estimates	

Performance

	Im	3m	l2m
Absolute	+5.4%	+2.6%	-8.6%
Rel. to FTSE IT	-0.8%	+1.7%	+5.8%
Source: FactSet			

Graph area Absolute/Relative 12 M



Source: FactSet

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Solid 3Q20: third consecutive EPS upgrade

Equita reported a strong set of 3Q20 results in a market backdrop which was not entirely supportive. Revenues grew 48% YoY (we estimate a +32% if K Finance first time consolidation is stripped out) with a mention to the IB performance (revenues of EUR10.9 million were 2.4x the 3Q19 level, even excluding K Finance Equita doubled its last year performance). All this with reference markets a little bit erratic (to say the least): M&A and ECM were not bad but still low in absolute terms, 3Q20 traded volumes on the MTA were down 8% YoY while Fixed Income declined by 39%. The usual strict control of costs leads to a EUR3.6 million net income, more than double vs. last year, and 62% above our estimates. We are thus upgrading our EPS forecasts for the third consecutive time this year (this time by 5.9% on 2020-22 EPS, +5.8% and +7.3% previously). This drove our TP increase, Buy rating confirmed.

- 3Q20: tough market conditions for Global Markets. Sales & Trading commissions declined 8% YoY against a negative market backdrop which saw Equita maintaining its 8% mkt share in Equities and increasing its share in Fixed Income to 7%. Client driven and market making managed to stay slightly up YoY (4%) but directional trading was still close to zero and the entire Global Market division closed the quarter with a 13% decline in revenues. Worth mentioning that, at group level, client-related revenues grew 47% in the quarter. Return on Tangible Equity at 27% and Total Capital Ratio of 19% completed the positive picture described by this set of results.
- IB and AAM made up for 65% of 3Q20 group revenues. With market conditions stabilizing, AAM posted EUR1.1 million revenues, and this accounting for almost zero commissions from the newly launched PD fund II fund (which will be more supportive in 4Q20). 2021 should get further support by the ELTIF launch and by the fund raising on the PD fund II which is still ongoing. We already mentioned the great performance of the IB division, helped by M&A/advisory, with some visible deals like Intesa-UBI and TIM/KKR. The pipeline is good according to management (mostly in M&A/advisory but IPO market seems to be there while bonds are a constant presence).
- > 2020 dividend guidance confirmed, seems even conservative as of now. Management confirmed its previous indication on 2020 DPS between EUR0.18-0.20 reiterating the concept that it also relies on un-distributed 2019 earnings for EUR3.9 million. The dividend guidance implies a EUR8.3-9.2 million distribution and compares with 9M20 net earnings of EUR8.8 million. Barring unexpected market behaviours in 4Q20, the dividend guidance seems more than feasible even in the high-end of the range. At current prices, a dividend yield of 8.1% remains a good reason to own the stock.

Financials EURm (Ratios (ex treas	ury shs), p	riced on	2-11-20					
	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E		2019A*	2020E	2021E	2022E
Revenues	58.3	61.4	68.6	72.8	P/E (x)	13.4	10.7	9.3	8.2
Profit Before Taxes	13.7	14.5	18.2	20.7	P/BV (x)	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.2
Net Income	9.5	10.0	11.6	13.2	TCR (%)	25.8%	25.7%	25.4%	25.7%
Net Income Adjusted	9.5	10.0	11.6	13.2	CETI ratio (%)	25.8%	25.7%	25.4%	25.7%
BVPS (EUR)	1.76	1.78	1.84	1.91	Dividend yield (%)	6.7%	8.1%	8.9%	9.4%
EPS (EUR)	0.21	0.22	0.25	0.29	Payout ratio (%)	90.5%	87.4%	83.1%	76.7%
DPS (EUR)	0.19	0.19	0.21	0.22	Net Inc./Sales (%)	16.4%	16.3%	16.9%	18.1%
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Source: Combanv data. UBI Banca estimates

Source: Combanv data. UBI Banca est. *Based on 2019 avg brice

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Key Financials										
(EURm)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E						
Revenues	58.3	61.4	68.6	72.8						
Profit Before Taxes	13.7	14.5	18.2	20.7						
Net profit	9.5	10.0	11.6	13.2						
Net Profit - Adjusted	9.5	10.0	11.6	13.2						
Shareholders' Equity	80.1	81.5	84.4	87.9						
RWA	220.6	231.0	247.1	260.1						

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

Key Profitability Drivers

(%)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
RoE	11.9%	12.3%	13.8%	15.0%
RoTE	17.2%	17.7%	20.1%	22.1%
Cost/Income	76.4%	76.4%	73.4%	71.6%
Comp/Revenues	46.5%	47.3%	47.0%	46.0%

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

Key Valuation Ratios

(x)	2019A*	2020E	2021E	2022E
P/E (x)	13.4	10.7	9.3	8.2
P/E Adjusted (x)	13.4	10.7	9.3	8.2
P/BV (x)	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.2
P/TBV (x)	2.0	1.6	1.6	1.6
Dividend Yield (%)	6.7%	8.1%	8.9%	9.4%
RoE/CoE (x)	1.71	1.76	1.98	2.16

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

* Based on 2019 average price

Growth Rates

Growth Nates				
(%)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
Revenues	-2.4%	5.2%	11.7%	6.1%
Profit Before Taxes	-11.9%	5.5%	25.7%	13.5%
Net Income	-13.5%	4.6%	16.2%	13.5%
Net Income Adjusted	-20.1%	4.6%	16.2%	13.5%

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

Recent developments

- > 3Q20 well above our estimates chiefly thanks to the Investment Banking division. The very strong performance of this division (revenues more than doubled) has to do not only with the first time consolidation of K Finance but also to extremely solid performances in the M&A Advisory area. 3Q'20 in details showed: a) Net revenues of EUR18.5million (up 48.2% YoY) above our estimates of EUR14.0 million; b) Global market revenues declined double digit - chiefly due to Directional Trading (basically at zero in the quarter) with Sales & Trading revenues down 8% YoY (in line with traded volumes on the markets); c) IB revenues more than doubled, supported also by the consolidation of K Finance (for an unspecified amount, we estimate EUR2 million), by a good market and by a specific solid performance by Equita; d) AAM revenues posted a strong YoY growth and EURI.Imillion revenues in the quarter (almost 3x the 3Q19 revenues which were impacted by the m-t-m of the SPAC); d) Pre-tax profit of EUR5.2million (116% YoY) was much better than our estimates of EUR3.4million; d) Net Income of EUR3.58million (+19.3% YoY) above our estimates of EUR2.2million.
- > Costs remain under control. Operating expenses grew by 32% YoY, due also to the inclusion of K Finance costs, and compares with a revenues growth of 48.2%. The compensation/revenues stood at 50% but the FY figure should be more in line with the 47% targeted by management. A strict cost control meant that other operating expenses declined by 7% despite extra-costs not present the year before (SGR, K Finance related costs, costs to structure the new financing). Optimization in the IT expenses following the completion of the "Retail Hub" project and of the trading fees were the main explanation for this positive outcome.

(USDm, %)	3Q19A	3Q20A	% chg	3Q20E	Actual vs estimates	9M19A	9M20A	% chg
Global Markets	7.5	6.5	-12.9%	6.1	7.6%	24.5	24.7	1.1%
Inv Banking	4.6	10.9	137.0%	6.5	67.7%	10.4	19.9	91.3%
AAM	0.4	1.1	175.0%	1.4	-21.4%	3.1	3.1	-1.3%
Net Revenues	12.5	18.5	48.2%	14.0	32.7%	38.0	47.7	25.6%
Personnel Costs	5.8	9.3		6.4		17.4	22.6	
Administrative expenses	4.4	4.1		4.2		12.5	12.7	
Profit before Taxes	2.4	5.2	116.7%	3.4	54.4%	8.2	12.4	52.0%
Attributable Net profit	1.64	3.58	118.2%	2.21	61.7%	5.61	8.70	55.1%
margin %	13.1%	19.3%		15.8%		14.8%	18.2%	
Attributable Net profit Adjusted	1.64	3.58	118.2%	2.21	61.7%	5.61	8.70	55.1%
margin %	13.1%	19.3%		15.8%		14.8%	18.2%	
Group Net Equity	80.1	81.4	1.7%	76.9	5.9%	80.1	81.4	1.7%

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Financial Projections

- Raising our estimates on the back of the 3Q20 results, mostly thanks to IB. We are raising our 2020 estimates by 14.0% as a result of a stronger IB performance in 3Q20 coupled with positive indications on the current pipeline and supported by the additional revenues coming from the new PD fund in 4Q20. At the end however, we are increasing our 2020 net income estimates by an amount similar to the 3Q20 surprise (EUR1.3 million) and, as such, we are not changing our 4Q20 estimates. All in all, our 2020-22 EPS estimates were raised by 5.9% thanks to the long-tail effect of the PD fund II launch in 2021 coupled with a higher starting base for IB.
- Our EUR0.19 dividend assumes a 87% payout (EUR0.20 DPS would get us back to the standard 90%). Given that the decision on the dividend proposal should be made in March/April we prefer to wait before raising such a sensitive assumption. The sentiment prevailing at that time on the pandemic development, eventual vaccines availability and in general the economic outlook would drive this decision more than the net profit itself.

Figure 2 - Old vs. new estimates

		2020E			2021E			2022E	
(EURm)	Old	New	% diff.	Old	New	% diff.	Old	New	% diff.
Revenues	57.0	61.4	7.6%	65.9	68.6	4.0%	71.4	72.8	1.9%
Profit before taxes	12.6	14.5	15.3%	16.5	18.2	10.6%	19.0	20.7	9.0%
Profit before taxes %	22.1%	23.6%		25.0%	26.6%		26.6%	28.4%	
Net profit	8.8	10.0	14.1%	11.3	11.6	3.1%	13.0	13.2	1.1%
Net profit adjusted	8.8	10.0	14.1%	11.3	11.6	3.1%	13.0	13.2	1.1%

Source: UBI Banca estimates





Figure 4 - Bond traded volumes by semester (EURbn)



Source: Assosim

Source: Assosim

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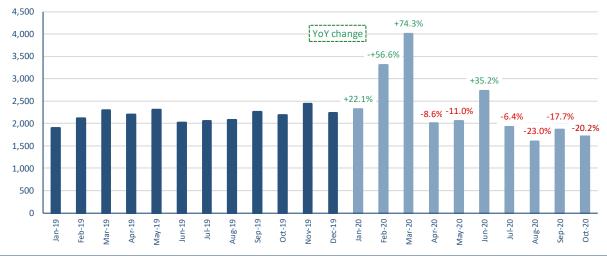


Figure 5 - Average daily trading volumes on MTA (EURm)

Source: Borsa Italiana

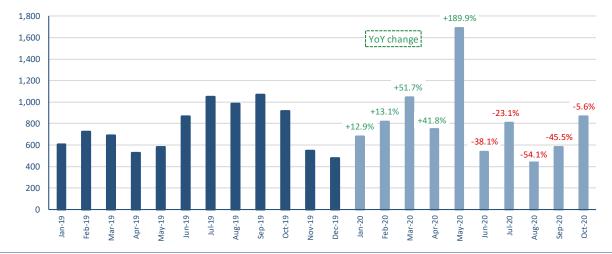


Figure 6 - Average daily trading volumes for fixed income (EURm)

Source: Borsa Italiana



Valuation

- Revising the target price by 3.0% to EUR3.13 (from EUR3.04). This is the result of the increase in estimates (5.9% on average in 2020-22 at net income level) which in fact implied a similar increase in the P/BV valuation. The fair value estimate deriving from the DDM was unchanged as we kept our DPS estimates.
- Executing along the 2022 BP line....which will represent a surprise to our estimates. With the growth in AuM and, consequently, in the AAM revenues, the stabilization of the IB business and, finally, the acquisition of K Finance Equita is executing along the lines of its 2022 BP. Following our upgrade in estimates we are close to the plan targets, but still not there yet: EUR75 million revenues with a net income/revenues ratio of 20% returns EUR15 million net income which is above our EUR13.2 million estimates.

Figure 7 - Valuation summary

(EUR)	New	Old	% difference
P/BV	3,31	3,14	5,4%
DDM (new) or Peers (old)	2,95	2,95	0%
Average	3,13	3,04	2,9%

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

Name	TIER	Price	Currency	Mkt Cap		P/Sales			P/E			P/BV		C	Div Yiel	d
				million	2020E	2021E	2022E	2020E	2021E	2022E	2020E	2021E	2022E	2020E	2021E	2022E
Piper Jaffray	1	76.I	USD	1,359	1.5 x	1.5 x	I.4 x	12.3	12.7	12.2	1.6 x	1.6 x	1.5 x	1.4%	1.7%	1.7%
Numis Corp	1	3.3	GBP	348	2.1 x	NA	NA	12.1	NA	NA	2.1 x	NA	NA	4.0%	NA	NA
Evli Pankki Oyj	1	11.2	EUR	270	3.7 x	3.3 x	3.1 x	16.3	13.7	11.7	3.3 ×	3.2 ×	3.0 ×	6.2%	6.7%	7.1%
Moelis	П	31.5	USD	2,095	3.4 x	2.9 x	2.6 x	25.2	17.3	15.3	5.5 ×	5.3 x	5.4 x	4.0%	4.6%	6.0%
Evercore	П	71.6	USD	2,908	1.9 x	1.7 x	1.6 x	15.9	11.7	9.8	3.3 ×	2.8 x	2.3 x	2.8%	3.0%	3.1%
Houlihan Lokey	П	54.8	USD	3,810	4.2 x	3.4 x	3.3 x	22.0	17.3	17.0	3.5 ×	3.2 x	2.9 x	2.1%	2.2%	2.4%
DeA Capital	П	1.1	EUR	293	5.0 x	4.2 x	NA	183.3	44.0	NA	0.7 x	0.7 x	NA	10.9%	10.9%	NA
Tikehau Capital	П	23.0	EUR	3,146	35.3 x	6.1 x	5.2 x	NA	14.9	11.9	I.I x	1.0 x	1.0 x	1.4%	2.7%	3.3%
Azimut	П	16.5	EUR	2,409	2.6 x	2.5 x	2.4 x	9.6	10.1	9.7	2.7 x	2.4 x	2.1 x	6.4%	6.7%	7.1%
Average					3.4 x	3.I x	2.6 x	16.1 x	14.3 x	11.9 x	2.7 x	2.6 x	2.3 x	4.4%	4.8%	4.4%
Equita Group		2.4	EUR	128	I.7 x	1.6 x	1.5 x	10.7 x	9.3 x	8.2 x	1.3 x	1.3 x	I.2 x	8.1%	8.9 %	9.4%
Tier I average					2.4 x	2.4 x	2.3 ×	13.6 x	13.2 x	12.0 x	2.4 x	2.4 x	2.3 ×	3.9%	4.2%	4.4%
Tier II average					8.7 x	3.5 x	3.0 ×	51.2 x	19.2 x	12.7 x	2.8 x	2.6 x	2.7 x	4.6%	5.0%	4.4%

Figure 8 - Peer Group multiples (priced on 12 November 2020)

Source: FactSet, UBI Banca estimates



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ESG Picture

Corporate Governance	
Does the company have a combined Chair/CEO?	No
Percentage of independent directors	42.86% (3 out of 7)
Does the company have loyalty shares?	Yes
Does major shareholders (if any) have a "shareholders pact" in place?	Yes
Has the company adopted a "poison pill" or "change of control" clauses?	No
Potential dilution from stock options outstanding + not yet granted?	Yes
CEO remuneration detail (fixed salary)	EUR 651,457
Chairman remuneration detail (fixed salary)	EUR 253,000
Is the share price included in the MBO criteria?	No
Percentage of treasury shares	8.1%
Climate related risk	
Has the company defined GHG-emissions targets?	No
How does the company assess climate-related risk?	No
Social Responsibilities	
Does the company publish a separated Sustainability report? No, but focus on	CSR in Annual Report
Does the company have a Chief SRI/CSR officer (or a committee)?	Yes
Does the Chief SRI/CSR officer votes in any of the company's committee?	Yes
Is the Investor Relation officer a different person from CFO (or other officers)	? Yes
Is the ESG strategy integrated in the Business Plan (or in the group strategy)?	Yes
Does the company have an ethical code?	Yes
Percentage of female directors	28.57% (2 out of 7)
How is the cybersecurity issue managed?	Not disclosed

Income Statement				
(EURm)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
Global Markets	31.5	30.3	33.0	34.2
Investment Banking	18.2	26.5	29.5	31.6
Alternative Asset Management	8.6	4.5	6.1	7.0
Net Revenues	58.3	61.4	68.6	72.8
Personnel Costs	27.1	29.0	32.2	33.5
Administrative Expenses	17.5	17.8	18.1	18.6
Profit Before Taxes	13.7	14.5	18.2	20.7
% on Net Revenues	23.6%	23.6%	26.6%	28.4%
Income Taxes	4.2	3.9	5.5	6.2
Group Net Profit	9.5	10.0	11.6	13.2
Non-recurring	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Group Net Profit - Adjusted	9.5	10.0	11.6	13.2

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

(EURm)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
Financial Assets at FV through P&L	54.9	69. I	75.5	82.8
Financial Assets at Amortised Cost	229.1	228.2	235.9	244.1
Equity Investments	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Tangible Assets	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
Intangible Assets	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
Tax Assets	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Other Assets	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7
Total Assets	306.7	320.0	334.2	349.6
Financial Liabilities at Amort. Cost	194.0	203.7	213.9	224.6
Financial Liabilities Held for Trad.	7.4	9.7	10.7	11.9
Tax Liabilities	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Other Liabilities	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5
Employees' Termination Inde millionities	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
Allowances for Risks and Charges	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2
Equity	80. I	81.5	84.4	87.9
Total Liabilities and Equity	306.7	320.0	334.2	349.6

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

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(%)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
TCR	25.8%	25.7%	25.4%	25.7%
CETI ratio	25.8%	25.7%	25.4%	25.7%
RoE	11.9%	12.3%	13.8%	15.0%
RoTE	17.2%	17.7%	20.1%	22.1%
Cost/Income	76.4%	76.4%	73.4%	71.6%
Comp/Revenues	46.5%	47.3%	47.0%	46.0%
Payout	90.5%	87.4%	83.1%	76.7%

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

Per Share Data

(EUR)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
EPS - reported	0.21	0.22	0.25	0.29
EPS - adjusted	0.21	0.22	0.25	0.29
DPS	0.19	0.19	0.21	0.22
BVPS - ex-treasury	1.76	1.78	1.84	1.91
TBVPS - ex treasury	1.43	1.42	1.45	1.51

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

2019A *	2020E	2021E	2022E
13.4	10.7	9.3	8.2
13.4	10.7	9.3	8.2
1.6	1.3	1.3	1.2
2.0	1.6	1.6	1.6
6.7%	8.1%	8.9%	9.4%
1.7	1.8	2.0	2.2
	13.4 13.4 1.6 2.0 6.7%	13.4 10.7 13.4 10.7 1.6 1.3 2.0 1.6 6.7% 8.1%	13.4 10.7 9.3 13.4 10.7 9.3 1.6 1.3 1.3 2.0 1.6 1.6 6.7% 8.1% 8.9%

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

* Based on 2019 average price

Growth rates

(%)	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
Revenues	-2.4%	5.2%	11.7%	6.1%
Profit Before Taxes	-11.9%	5.5%	25.7%	13.5%
Net Income	-13.5%	4.6%	16.2%	13.5%
Net Income Adjusted	-20.1%	4.6%	16.2%	13.5%

Source: Company data, UBI Banca estimates

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On the basis of the checks carried out no interest/conflict of interest arose.

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Frequency of updates

UBI Banca aims to provide continuous coverage of the companies in conjunction with the timing of periodical accounting reports and any exceptional event that occurs affecting the issuer's sphere of operations and in any case at least twice per year. The companies for which UBI Banca acts as Sponsor or Specialist are covered in compliance with regulations of the market authorities.

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Valuation methodology

UBI Banca's analysts value the Company subject to their recommendations using several methods among which the most prevalent are: the Discounted Cash Flow method (DCF), the Economic Value Added method (EVA), the Multiple comparison method, the SOP method and the NAV method.

The analysts use the above valuation methods alternatively and/or jointly at their discretion. The assigned target price may differ from their fair value, as it also takes into account overall market/sector conditions, corporate/market events, and corporate specifics (i.e. holding discounts) reasonably considered to be possible drivers of the company's share price performance. These factors may also be assessed using the methodologies indicated above.

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Ranking system

UBI Banca's analysts use an "absolute" rating system, not related to market performance. The explanation of the rating system is listed below:

Buy: if the target price is 15% higher than the market price, over the next 12 months.

Hold: if the target price is 15% below or 15% above the market price, over the next 12 months.

Sell: if the target price is 15% lower than the market price, over the next 12 months.

No Rating: the investment rating and target price have been suspended as there is not sufficient fundamental basis for determining an investment rating or target. The previous investment rating and target price, if any, are no longer in effect. Alternatively, No Rating is assigned in certain circumstances when UBI Banca is acting in any advisory capacity in a strategic transaction involving the Company.

Target price: the market price that the analyst believes that the share may reach within a one-year time horizon.

Market price: closing price on the day before the issue date of the report, appearing on the first page.

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Distribution of ratings

Equity rating dispersion in the past 12 months

Buy	Hold	Sell	No Rating
74.5%	21.3%	1.1%	3.2%

Proportion on issuers to which UBI Banca has supplied investment banking services relating to the last 12 months

Buy	Hold	Sell	No Rating
60.0%	5.0%	100%	100%

For further information regarding yearly and quarterly rating statistics and descriptions, please refer to <u>www.ubibanca.com/equity-research</u>.

UBI> Banca

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Historical ratings and target prices

Date	Rating	Target Price (EUR)	Market Price (EUR)
9 May 2019	BUY	3.57	3.02
12 September 2019	BUY	3.50	2.68
18 November 2019	BUY	3.37	2.60
19 March 2020	BUY	2.57	2.12
6 May 2020	BUY	2.71	2.31
10 July 2020	BUY	2.89	2.49
II September 2020	BUY	3.04	2.48