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CSDR (CENTRAL SECURITIES DEPOSITORY REGULATION)

Updated in November 2025

Central Securities Depositories (CSDs) are Financial Market Infrastructures (FMIs) alongside Trading Venues, Central Counterparties (CCPs), Trade Repositories and Payment Systems. Like CCPs they contribute to a large degree in maintaining the financial stability.

In October 2010, the Financial Stability Board called for more robust FMIs and for a reinforcement of the existing standards this resulting in the publication by CPSS – IOSCO, in 2012, of the Principles for financial market infrastructures (PFMI). The PFMI recalled that “a central securities depository provides securities accounts, central safekeeping services, and asset services, which may include the administration of corporate actions and redemptions, and plays an important role in helping to ensure the integrity of securities issues (that is, ensure that securities are not accidentally or fraudulently created or destroyed or their details changed)”. The conclusion made is that “CSDs play a critical role in the protection of securities and help ensure the integrity of securities transactions”.

CSDR, following MIFID2/MIFIR (covering Trading Venues) and EMIR (focused on CCPs), addresses the CSD’s topic in Europe by giving the latter a regulatory framework in which they can exercise their function meanwhile requiring several measures to improve the settlement and to reinforce the investor protection.

CSDR is built on four main pillars:

- 1. INFRASTRUCTURE** by laying down a unified and harmonised framework for all European CSDs
 - Defining a CSD, its role and its responsibilities
 - Establishing a set of common requirements for CSDs operating securities settlement systems
 - Freeing the choice of an issuer CSD for issuers
 - Requiring CSDs to have a recovery plan
- 2. STRENGTHENING THE INVESTOR PROTECTION**
 - Dematerialization and immobilisation of securities, book-entry form for transferable securities
 - Segregation of investors’ assets
- 3. IMPROVEMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT**
 - Reduction of the settlement cycle
 - Reinforcement of the obligation to settle transactions in transferable securities, money-market instruments, units in collective investment undertakings or emission allowances on the date agreed between the parties (also called: ISD for Intended Settlement Date)
 - Imposition of a settlement disciplines regime: set of several measures aiming to prevent and address settlement fails and thus have a transaction be fully settled on ISD

4. TRANSPARENCY

- Setting obligations of reporting to national competent authorities and ESMA
- Identification of the issuing entities via the use of LEI (Legal Entity Identifier)

The CSDR review process has started in 2020. The CSDR Refit has entered into force on January 2024 and will be amended to take into account the future reduction of the settlement cycle (the move to T+1).



1. Overview

a. Key aspects of the Regulation

- **Definition of a CSD (effective from 17/09/2014)**

CORE SERVICES

3 core services have been retained:

- Initial recording of securities in a book-entry system ('notary service');
- Providing and maintaining securities accounts at the top tier level ('central maintenance service');
- Operating a securities settlement system ('settlement service').

DEFINITION OF A CSD

A CSD is legal person that operates a securities settlement system and provides at least one other core service.

ISSUER / INVESTOR CSD – INTERNATIONAL CSD

In application of the CSDR's definition of a CSD, international CSDs (also called ICSDs), namely EOC Bank and Clearstream Banking Luxembourg, are CSDs since they operate a SSS and provide the central maintenance service.

If the level 1 of CSDR refers only to "CSD", the level 2, made of delegated regulations, brings some clarification by distinguishing between Issuer CSD and Investor CSD. According to the delegated act (2017/392):

- 'issuer CSD' means a CSD which provides the notary service or the central maintenance service in relation to a securities issue
- 'investor CSD' means a CSD that either is a participant in the securities settlement system operated by another CSD or that uses a third party or an intermediary that is a participant in the securities settlement system operated by another CSD in relation to a securities issue.

- **General framework for CSDs (effective from 01/12/2016)**

The regulation details the requirements a CSD shall comply with. They cover organisational and operational procedures as well as prudential requirements giving the business framework for CSD activities (designation of competent authorities, CSD licensing, passport of CSDs, third countries CSDs, organizational and transparency rules and CSD governance, risk mitigation, integrity of issuance, ...).

CSD'S AGREEMENT

CSDR requires all CSDs located within the Union to obtain their agreement under CSDR (no grandfather clause for already operational CSDs). The process to obtain authorization may be long and complex depending on the size of the CSD. It is managed with the Competent authority that transmits all information to any other relevant authorities (Central Bank, other Member States authorities if needed). However, within six months from the submission of a complete application, the competent authority informs the applicant CSD whether the authorisation has been granted or not.

The register of granted CSDs is available on the ESMA website (cf. point 2 below).

INFRASTRUCTURE

INFRASTRUCTURE

INTEGRITY OF THE ISSUANCE

CSD shall have appropriate rules and procedures (accounting practices, controls...) to ensure the integrity of securities issues. Daily reconciliation measures, including cooperation with potential other entities involved in the reconciliation process (issuer, registrars, issuance agents, transfer agents, common depositories, other CSDs...) shall permit to verify that the number of securities making up a securities issue or part of it is equal to the sum of securities recorded on the securities accounts of the participants. Securities overdrafts, debit balances or securities creation shall not be allowed in a securities settlement system operated by a CSD.

PROTECTION

SEGREGATION

CSD shall keep records and accounts to segregate in the accounts with the CSD, the securities of a participant from those of any other participant and from the CSD's own assets. It shall also enable any participant to segregate its securities from those of its clients and offer the choice of having "omnibus account structures" or "individual client segregation". Participant of the CSD shall offer its clients at least the choice between these two structures at CSD level and inform them of the costs and risks associated with each option. The individual segregation is an obligation for citizens, residents and legal persons established in a Member State where this account structure is required. A CSD shall not use securities that do not belong to it unless it has the participant's prior express consent.

PROTECTION
TRANSPARENCY

- **The "T+2" settlement cycle (mainly effective as from 06/10/2014)**

T+1
SETTLEMENT

CSDR institutes a settlement/delivery cycle taking place a maximum of two days after the trading date (T). It applies to transactions in transferable securities when executed on a Trading Venue (Regulated Market, MTF or OTF as defined in MIFID2/MIFIR). Harmonisation was required to be effective by 1st January 2015 with specific cases of postponement to 2016 or six months before a T2S migration. It must be noted that most of the European countries decided to anticipate the move. Thus the "big bang" took place on the 6th of October 2014 for most of them. If CSDR opens the door to a potential T+1 or even a T settlement cycle, all the markets went to a "T+2" cycle.

Over The Counter (OTC) transactions in transferable securities are de facto not concerned by the "T+2" requirement. However, they remain submitted to the obligation to settle on the agreed Intended Settlement Date (same as for transactions in money-market instruments, units in collective investment undertakings and emission allowances).

- **Dematerialisation and immobilisation of securities (as of 01/01/2023 for new issuance and 01/01/2025 for all securities)**

CSDR imposes the book entry form for transferable securities admitted to trading on a trading venue where the issuer is established in the Union. The objective of this requirement is two folds: firstly, to increase the efficiency of the settlement and secondly to ensure the integrity of a securities issue.

PROTECTION
SETTLEMENT

With regards to the initial book-entry recording, the regulation does not impose any form leaving the choice between immobilisation (the act of concentrating the location of physical securities in a CSD in a way that enables subsequent transfers to be made by book entry) or immediate dematerialisation (where financial instruments exist only as book entry records). It only requires the initial book-entry to be recorded by a CSD once transactions in such securities are executed on trading venues or provided as collateral. Initial recording of securities in a book-entry system also called 'notary service' is one of the core services that defines a CSD.

To be noted: the book-entry form is mandatory for new issuances as well as for transferable securities already issued. Thus, CSDR has defined two dates for the start of the obligation: 1st January 2023 for the former and 1st January 2025 for all.

- **Settlement disciplines regime (originally as of 14/09/2020, finally as of 01/02/2022 or 15/11/2025)**

CSDR requires participant to settle transactions in transferable securities, units in collective investment undertakings, money-market instruments and emission allowances on the intended settlement date.

SETTLEMENT

In addition, and for transactions on financial instruments which are admitted to trading or traded on a trading venue or cleared by a CCP, CSDR requires CSDs to have a settlement disciplines regime in place to prevent and address settlement fails. Its coverage is wide and extends to almost all the post-trade areas. Starting at the point in time where the transaction is confirmed, it continues

with the application of penalties for each failing day and ends up with a buy-in process. It might be noted that CSDs are required to provide their participants with functionalities facilitating the settlement.

CONFIRMATION / ALLOCATION (01/02/2022)

With a delay for settlement potentially down to 2 days, there is a need to ensure at the earliest stage that all the necessary settlement information has been exchanged. This is the rationale for this requirement applied to the parties of the transaction. Investment firms will require their professional clients to provide them in the written allocation / written confirmation with any information needed to ease the settlement (included the identification of the accounts to be used). Moreover, it must be received on trade day (T) or under certain condition before T+1 noon.

PENALTIES (01/02/2022)



A matched settlement instruction that is not fully settled on ISD shall be penalized irrespective of the reason of the non-settlement (lack of securities, lack of cash, instruction put on hold, instruction matched after the ISD,...). The penalty is applied for each day the instruction fails to settle. It is calculated at the level of the instruction, on ad valorem basis (the rate depends on the type of the financial instrument or on the currency) and using a reference price that should be the same whatever the CSD (the calculation shall be identical for all EU CSDs). The penalty paid by the failing participant to the CSD will be given back the counterparty of the former. Thus, in case of a chain of settlements, it will remain neutral for participants in the middle.

Based on the outcome of the T2S CSDR TF, the European association of CSDs (ECSDA) has established its own framework. The aim is to ensure an harmonized application of CSDR (specifically on penalties) among CSDs (i.e. beyond T2S) thanks to a single rulebook.

The first months have proved problematic both on the daily information and on the monthly process (monthly reports and collection / distribution of penalties) leading to the creation of 3 task forces under the umbrella of ESMA. To be noted, 3 CSDs (Croatia, Hungary and Norway) started later than February 2022.

As of August 2024, all penalties (involving or not a CCP) are paid to the CSDs (update of article 19 of level 2 in the Delegated Act 2018/1229 by the delegated act 20223/1626).

BUY-INS (THEORITICALLY 15/11/2025)



CSDR considers that failing settlements can't remain endlessly as such, even if penalised. Therefore, CSDR institutes a mandatory buy-in process aiming to close the outstanding settlement. The buy-in shall be triggered by the buyer against the seller (meaning at the transaction level rather than the settlement level). It shall happen 4 or 7 days after ISD but up to 15 days for transactions executed on a SME Growth market (as defined in MIFID2/MIFIR). The buyer will appoint a buy-in agent to buy the missing instruments. The costs related to this purchase will be charged to the defaulter. A cash compensation procedure may be used in case the buy-in agent didn't succeed. If the buy-in only applies when the reason of the fail is linked to the securities, it covers all failing settlements (including OTC ones) and thus goes beyond the current buy-in process triggered by CCPs against failing clearing members.

Following the concerns raised by the industry and numerous trade associations, the EC has decided to review the mandatory buy-in in the context of the review of CSDR (CSDR refit) and introduced a new starting date (15 November 2025 instead of the 1st February 2022) so that the MBI as envisaged by the European Commission under CSDR Refit will override the original version before the latter enters into force. Most of the issues raised by the industry against the mandatory buy-in are addressed (scope, multiple buy-ins for a single lack of stock, repapering, impact on market making,...).

MESSAGES

The daily and monthly reporting use swift messages either in norm ISO 15022 or ISO 20022. As regards the former although two existing messages have been adapted to welcome penalties, the most used is the MT537. However the usage in real life (ie with real volumes) has showed the need for some improvements (see the dedicated TF).

For buy-ins, an adaptation of the MT530 is foreseen in order to transmit the information related to the execution of a buy-in along the custody chain (from the buyer to the CSD).

SETTLEMENT EFFICIENCY

Several working groups have been created in anticipation (in France) or following the start of the penalisation of fails. Their aim is to analyse the settlement, determine the activities / types of financial instruments for which the settlement efficiency has to be improved and define new market practices, additional functionalities provided by CSDs ... This work is of the utmost importance having in mind the future CSDR Refit in which the introduction of a MBI would stem from a level of settlement efficiency considered as not acceptable by the regulators. ESMA held a one day workshop dedicated to settlement efficiency (on the 26th of September 2023). It has been the occasion for ESMA to provide the industry with some initial figures based on regulatory reporting CSDs are required to send to their NCAs.

- **Reporting to competent authorities / ESMA**

TRANSPARENCY

FOR CSDs (PART OF THE SETTLEMENT DISCIPLINES REGIME)

CSDs shall publish on their website information on settlement fails (global volumes, volumes of fails to deliver and of fails to pay, rates of settlement fails, ..., measures to improve settlement efficiency if needed). The detail of the information to be provided could be found in the Annex III of the same text). The figures show disparate situations and some of them raised questions as regards the high level of fails.

In addition, they are required to provide the competent authorities with more detailed information on settlement fails. Moreover, the reporting shall include the “top 10” participants with highest rates of settlement fails during the covered period (LEI, figures in value and in volume, rates of settlement fails). Also since February 2022, CSDs are required to provide reporting on settlements (including data on fails) their competent authorities with. These reporting are then transmitted to ESMA for analysis.

FOR CUSTODIANS: REPORTING OF INTERNALISED SETTLEMENTS (SINCE JULY 2019)

CSDR defines “settlement internaliser” as any institution which executes transfer orders on behalf of clients or on its own account other than through a securities settlement system.

Settlement internalisers shall report to the competent authorities of their place of establishment on a quarterly basis the aggregated volume and value of all securities transactions that they settle outside securities settlement systems. This report shall be submitted within 10 working days from the end of the quarter to be reported. Competent authorities transmit the information to ESMA and inform ESMA of any potential risk resulting from that settlement activity. ESMA has issued in 2020 an analysis based on the reporting received via the National Competent Authorities but didn’t make the same exercise in the following years.

The ISR which was part of the EC’s consultation has not been retained in the list of the 6 topics to potentially be reviewed.

b. Other aspects

- **Choice of the Issuer CSD (as of the CSD agreement)**

INFRASTRUCTURE

CSDR allows issuers to arrange for its securities admitted to trading on regulated markets or MTFs or traded on trading venues to be recorded in any CSD established in any Member State. The corporate or similar law of the Member State under which the securities are constituted shall continue to apply.

- **Banking licence / purpose bank (as of the CSD agreement)**

 CSDR
Refit**INFRASTRUCTURE**

CSDR defines separation between CSD and Banking activities.

A CSD shall not itself provide any banking-type ancillary services unless it has obtained an additional authorisation to provide such services in a limited scope of activities linked to settlement. It can be authorised to provide such service if it is granted as “credit institution”. The banking license can be used only for a limited scope of activities linked with settlement business. This implies specific capital surcharge that reflects the risks, including credit and liquidity risks. The CSD shall monthly and annually report to the competent authority on the extent and management of intra-day liquidity risk. Furthermore, an adequate recovery plan shall be submitted to competent authority to ensure continuity of its critical operations in case of situations where liquidity or credit risk occurs as a result of provision of these banking services.

It can also designate a credit institution to provide these services. The credit institution shall strictly segregate these activities in a specific legal entity being a “limited purposed bank” that will have to send the same kinds of report to the competent authority and submit appropriate recovery plan.

- **Outsourcing**

INFRASTRUCTURE

A CSD can outsource services or activities to a third party but remains fully responsible.

It must comply with a list of conditions (no delegation of its responsibility, non-alteration of its relationship and obligations to its participants or issuers, no depriving of systems and controls to manage risks, cooperation of the provider with competent authorities, ...). T2S is an example of Securities Settlement System outsourcing.

- **First level of finality**

A CSD shall ensure that the securities settlement system it operates offers adequate protection to participants by ensuring that each securities settlement system it operates defines the moments of entry and of irrevocability of transfer orders. It shall disclose the rules governing the finality of transfers of securities and cash in a securities settlement system.

PROTECTION

SETTLEMENT

- **CSDs links / interoperability (18/09/2019)**

A CSD has the right to become a participant of another CSD and set up a standard link with that CSD. The request can be rejected for risk consideration. In that case the demander may complain to the competent authority of CSD having refused access. Technical regulatory standards specify the risks to be taken into account.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- **CSDs Passport (as of CSD is agreed)**



An authorised CSD may provide services covered by this authorisation within the territory of the Union provided it has communicated to the competent authority of the home Member State the list of Member State in which it intends to operate, the services it wants to provide, the currencies it intends to process as well as the organisational structure in case of branch.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Third country CSDs**



An authorised CSD may maintain or establish link with third-country CSD. Third-country CSDs may also provide CSD services within the Union. This availability is subject to effective authorisation, supervision and oversight, ensuring full compliance with the prudential requirements applicable in that third country. Cooperation arrangements between ESMA and the responsible authorities in the third country should be established.

INFRASTRUCTURE

c. CSDR and Brexit:

- **Internal settlements' reporting**

No real impact

- **SDR**

As part of a package of measures contained in its Written Ministerial Statement, the UK has announced it will not implement the CSDR settlement discipline regime (Summer 2020). In between HMT has issued a questionnaire regarding UK settlement efficiency. As they said "Any new regime in the UK will be developed through dialogue with industry, with sufficient time provided to prepare for implementation".

- **Third country CSD**

The UK CSD (CREST) is now a third country CSD.

d. CSDR Review:

The review of the regulation began in 2020; see our dedicated Fiche on CSDR Refit. CSDR Refit has been published in the EU OJ and entered into force on the 16th of January 2024.

2. Reference text(s)

- [European Parliament - Presentation](#)
- [European Parliament - Procedure File](#)
- [Level 1 regulation of 23 July 2014](#)
- [Level 2 acts \(except Settlement Disciplines Regime\) of 11 November 2016](#)
- [Level 2 acts \(Settlement Disciplines Regime\) of 25 May 2018 with a compliance date on 13 Sep 2020](#)
- [Register of CSDs accredited under CSDR](#)
- [Q&A by ESMA](#)
- [EC Q&A](#)
- [ESMA guidelines on allocation / confirmation](#)
- [ESMA starts publishing questions received through its Q&A process](#)
- [Written Ministerial Statement on SDR](#)
- [ESMA report on banking-type ancillary services under CSDR](#)
- [ESMA report on use of FinTech by CSDs](#)
- [Joint Trade associations letter regarding SDR \(14/07/2021\)](#)
- [ESMA letter on SDR \(23/09/2021\)](#)
- [ESMA's letter to NCA \(December 2021\)](#)
- [AMF's answer to ESMA](#)
- [ESMA's proposal for the MBI postponement](#)
- [New date for the MBI](#)
- [CSDs' LEI](#)
- [Update of Article 19](#)

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