

Oslo Børs Holding ASA – First quarter 2003

First quarter highlights:

- **Some reduction in revenues on trading and financial market data sales**
 - **Continued reduction in other operating expenses**
 - **Profit: NOK 10.3m (13.1m)**
 - **Earnings per share NOK 2.05 (2.62)**
 - **Return on equity (annualised) 18.5% (18.7%)**
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Activity in the first quarter (1st quarter 2002 figures in parenthesis)

General

Oslo Børs Holding ASA achieved a first-quarter post-tax profit of NOK 10.3 (13.1) million.

The decline in international securities markets intensified in the first quarter of 2003. The Oslo Børs Benchmark Index fell from 115.1 to 104.03, or 9.7%, in the same period. Transaction numbers in the equity market fell from about 550,000 in the fourth quarter of 2002 to about 465,000 (626,000) in the quarter under review. In value terms, turnover dropped from about NOK 107 billion to 102 (129) billion in the first quarter of 2003. At the end of the first quarter 196 companies were listed on Oslo Børs. Eight companies were delisted during the quarter.

The number of Oslo Børs's remote members was further increased with the admission of Merrill Lynch International in the first quarter. Merrill Lynch started trading on Oslo Børs in March.

Activity in the business area Fixed Income Markets remained high in the first quarter. Turnover in the derivatives market was on a positive trend. The number of traded contracts totalled about 870,000 (775,000) in the quarter compared with about 796,000 in the fourth quarter of 2002. Premium averaged NOK 7.4 (6.7) compared with NOK 7.2 in the fourth quarter of 2002.

Sales of financial market data are mainly measured by the number of terminals with access to market data from Oslo Børs. Clients of information distributors such as Reuters, Bloomberg etc., purchase terminals that provide access to price and index information from various market places. Manpower reductions and general tightening measures brought a reduction of some 6 per cent in the number of terminals in the first quarter. Revenues were about 3 per cent down on the fourth quarter of 2002.

Revenues

First quarter 2002 revenues totalled NOK 52.9 (59.6) million. The reduction from last year's first quarter is largely due to reduced trading in the equity market and lower revenues from sales of financial market data.

Costs

Oslo Børs's costs continued their positive trend. Total operating expenses were reduced from NOK 44.5 million in the first quarter of 2002 to NOK 40.4 million in the quarter under review. The reduction from the fourth quarter of 2002 was about NOK 3.6 million.

Salary and staff costs in the first quarter were about NOK 2.5 million higher than in the same period of 2002. This was essentially due to last year's first-quarter capitalisation of internal resources totalling NOK 3.5 million spent on system development projects.

Other operating expenses show a reduction of the order of NOK 6.5 million compared with the first quarter of 2002 when rehabilitation of the stock exchange building entailed costs of NOK 5.7 million. The Saxess trading system went live in May 2002. Leasing outlays of NOK 6.6 million were expensed in the first quarter of 2003. This compares with NOK 3.0 million spent on the previous trading system in the first quarter of 2002.

Costs, cont.

When corrected for these items, the remaining segment of other operating expenses was about NOK 4.3 million lower than the figure for last year's first quarter.

The table below corrects for the effect of the capitalisation of internal resources employed in projects, the costs of rehabilitating the stock exchange building and of leasing the trading system or the equivalent, thereby providing a picture of the trend in underlying operating expenses. The table shows that the operating expenses were reduced by NOK 5.5 million from the first quarter of 2002. This is in keeping with Oslo Børs's focus on reducing its own costs.

| Operating expenses (NOKm) | Q1 2003 | Q1 2002 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Booked | 40,4 | 44,5 |
| - capitalisation of internal resources (+) | | 3,5 |
| - rehabilitation of stock exchange building (-) | | 5,7 |
| - trading system lease/charges (-) | 6,6 | 3,0 |
| Underlying operating expenses | 33,8 | 39,3 |

VAT treatment of fees received for access to trading system

Oslo Børs has dialogued with the tax authorities with a view to clarifying the tax treatment of fees received for access to the trading system, which is owned by OM Technology.

Oslo Børs contends that access to the trading system comes under the Value Added Tax Act's exemptions in respect of financial services, and that VAT should not be payable on the fees received for such services. The Oslo County Tax Office, for its part, does not view such services as coming under the above exemption and considers that VAT should be payable.

Oslo Børs has formally referred the issue to the authorities for consideration. VAT on these services entails an annual outlay of NOK 3-4 million. The accounts for 2002 and the first quarter of 2003 make allowance for the possibility that VAT will have to be paid on these services.

EUs Financial Services Action Plan

In 1999 the EU initiated a major project with a view to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of capital and securities markets as part of its overarching aim to make the Union the world's most competitive and sustainable economy by 2010. The project involves a number of so far unregulated areas as well as revision of existing rules. This will impact directly on Norwegian legislation, and on Oslo Børs and its customers, through the EEA agreement. Since Oslo Børs is responsible for inspecting prospectuses prepared by companies and loan issuers whose securities are quoted on the exchange, this area of the project is probably of greatest significance for Oslo Børs.

The timing for the transfer of responsibility for prospectus control in Norway will depend on the deadlines set in the final directive and on the date on which the Norwegian authorities decide that the transfer shall take effect. A transitional period not exceeding five years is planned. Oslo Børs holds the view that transferring control responsibility from Oslo Børs to another institution will neither increase the level of service, nor enhance quality nor reduce costs to issuers. The probable revenue loss to Oslo Børs (approx. NOK 11 million in 2002) is likely to be only partially offset by lower costs since the resources spent on prospectus control are closely related and crucial to other tasks such as control of admission to listing, inspecting financial statements, monitoring compliance with the disclosure requirements as well as Oslo Børs's general surveillance of the market place. Total costs for issuers will probably increase.

Outlook

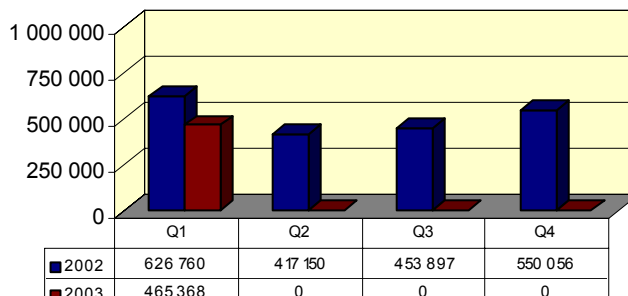
In view of the continuing decline in market activity, the declining number of listed companies and the falling revenues from sales of financial market data, Oslo Børs expects revenues in 2003 to fall short of the 2002 level. Oslo Børs is making a concerted effort to achieve greater cost-effectiveness.

Based on the current market outlook, Oslo Børs expects lower revenues than last year and anticipates operating expenses totalling just under NOK 160 million. A somewhat weaker overall profit performance is expected in 2003 than in 2002.

Market development

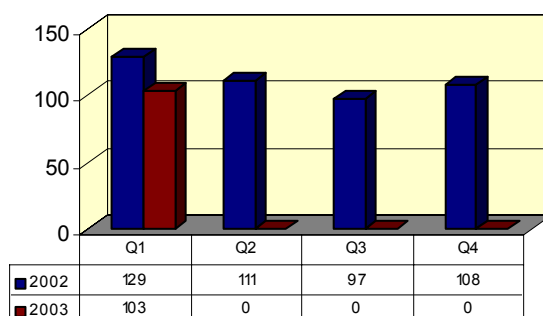
Equity market - number of transactions

The number of share transactions was about 15% lower than in the fourth quarter of 2002, and 26% down on the figure for the first quarter of last year.



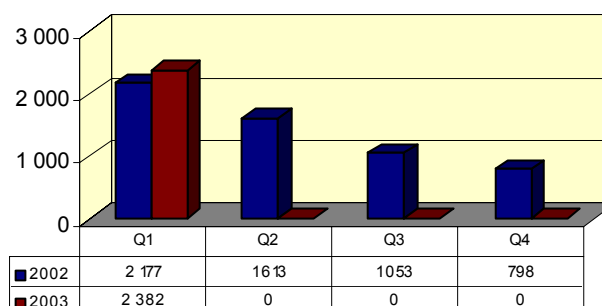
Equity market - value of trades Billion NOK

The value of equity market trades was somewhat lower than the previous quarter (5%), and about 20% lower than in the same period last year.



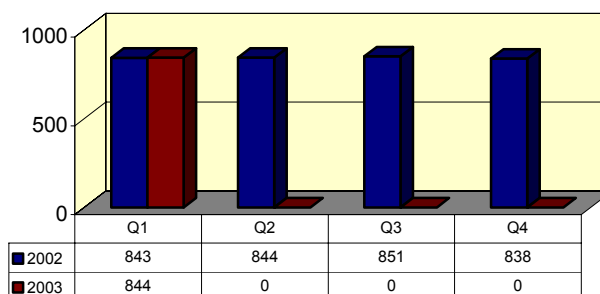
Equity market - value of new issues Million NOK

The first quarter of 2003 saw a significantly higher number of issues in the primary equity market compared with the fourth quarter of 2002. The first-quarter value of new issues totalled NOK 2.4 billion compared with NOK 0.8 billion in the fourth quarter of 2002.



Bond market - number of listed issues

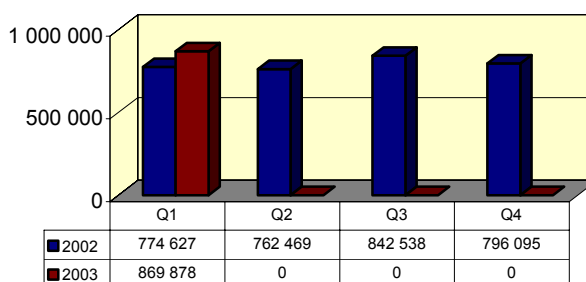
The number of listed issues in the fixed income market was six higher than at the end of the previous quarter, and is on par with the first quarter of 2002.



Derivatives market - number of contracts traded

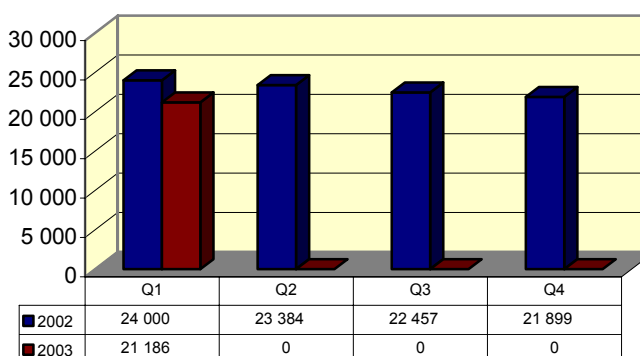
Activity in the derivative market was somewhat higher than in previous periods. The number of contracts traded was about 9% higher than in the fourth quarter of 2002, and about 12% higher than in the same period of 2002.

Premiums averaged NOK 7.4 in the period compared with NOK 6.7 in the same period of 2002.



Revenues from sales of financial market data

Revenues from sales of financial market data showed a further fall in the first quarter of 2003. The decline on the first quarter of 2002 was about 12%, and on the fourth quarter of 2002 about 3%.



Please see www.oslobors.no/ob/ir for additional key operating figures. All figures are in NOK 1000, and concerns the Oslo Børs Holding ASA Group unless otherwise specified. The Group consist of Oslo Børs Holding ASA, Oslo Børs ASA and Oslo Børs Informasjon AS.

Profit and loss account

The profit and loss account has been prepared based on the same accounting policies as the annual accounts.

| | 1st Quarter 2003 | 1st Quarter 2002 | 2002 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Operating revenues | 52 885 | 59 611 | 222 296 |
| Operating costs | | | |
| Salary and other personnel expenses | 19 401 | 16 931 | 73 187 |
| Depreciation | 4 554 | 4 577 | 16 439 |
| Other operating costs | 16 459 | 22 951 | 80 179 |
| Total operating costs | 40 415 | 44 459 | 169 806 |
| Operating profit | 12 470 | 15 151 | 52 490 |
| Net financial items | 1 773 | 3 012 | 8 670 |
| Ordinary pre-tax profit | 14 243 | 18 163 | 61 160 |
| Tax | 3 988 | 5 086 | 18 168 |
| Earnings for the period | 10 255 | 13 077 | 42 992 |
| Earnings per share (NOK) | 2,05 | 2,62 | 8,60 |

Balance sheet

The balance sheet has been prepared based on the same accounting policies as the annual accounts.

At quarter-end current liabilities totalled about NOK 123 million. Of this, about NOK 30 million comprises provision for dividend that will be recommended to the General Meeting. NOK 54 million refers to accrual accounting of quotation fees and annual licence fees. Payable tax is included in an amount of NOK 13 million.

| | 31 March 2003 | 31 March 2002 | 31 Dec 2002 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Fixed assets | | | |
| IT systems | 56 237 | 54 692 | 57 857 |
| Deferred tax assets | 30 363 | 38 132 | 30 363 |
| Tangible assets | 43 387 | 24 218 | 44 350 |
| Financial fixed assets | 25 374 | 41 004 | 23 738 |
| Current assets | | | |
| Receivables | 27 594 | 37 789 | 35 848 |
| Cash and liquid assets | 180 933 | 221 450 | 112 766 |
| Assets | 363 888 | 417 286 | 304 921 |
| Equity | 226 394 | 286 227 | 216 139 |
| Liabilities | | | |
| Provisions for liabilities | 14 830 | 11 652 | 13 484 |
| Current liabilities | 122 665 | 119 407 | 75 300 |
| Equity and liabilities | 363 888 | 417 286 | 304 921 |

Cash flow

The Oslo Børs Group recorded a net cash flow of NOK 68.2 million in the first quarter.

Cash flow from operational activities is traditionally high in the year's first quarter due to receipts of annual fees from issuers, Oslo Børs members and distributors of financial market data. The increase in cash flow from operational activities compared with the first quarter of 2002 is primarily due to developments in working capital in the two quarters, and not to underlying operational improvements.

Cash and cash equivalents held at the end of the quarter came to NOK 180.9 million.

| | 1st Quarter 2003 | 1st Quarter 2002 | 2002 |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Cash flow from | | | |
| - operational activities | 70 139 | 61 838 | 65 528 |
| - investment activities | -1 975 | -15 309 | -37 684 |
| - financing activities | 0 | 0 | -90 000 |
| Cash and liquid assets at the start of the period | 112 766 | 174 922 | 174 922 |
| Change in cash and liquid assets | 68 163 | 46 528 | -62 156 |
| Cash and liquid assets at the end of the period | 180 929 | 221 450 | 112 766 |
| Cash flow per share before financing activities (NOK) | 13,63 | 9,31 | 5,57 |
| Cash flow per share (NOK) | 13,63 | 9,31 | -12,43 |

Equity

At quarter-end equity amounted to NOK 226.4 million, and the equity ratio was approximately 62 per cent.

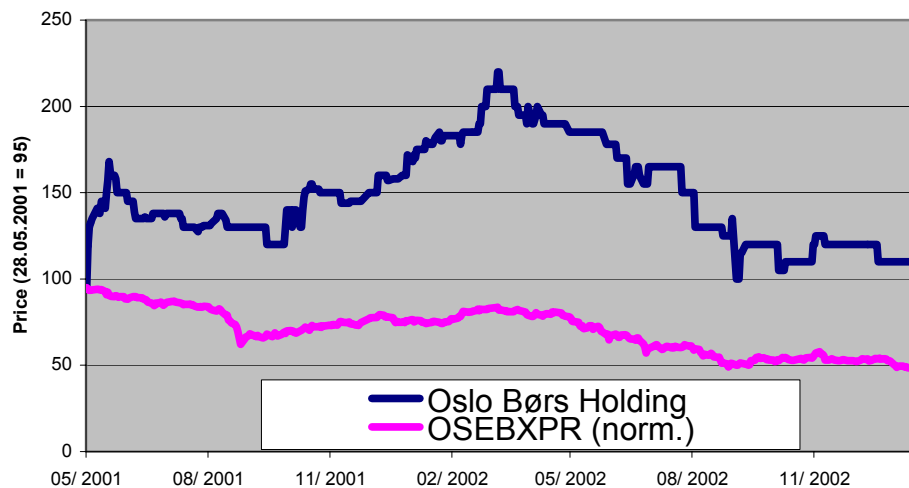
| | 1st Quarter 2003 | 1st Quarter 2002 | 2002 |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Equity at the start of the period | 216 139 | 273 149 | 273 149 |
| Profit for the period | 10 255 | 13 077 | 42 992 |
| Dividend | 0 | 0 | -30 000 |
| Capital reduction | 0 | 0 | -70 000 |
| Equity at the end of the period | 226 394 | 286 226 | 216 139 |
| Equity ratio | 62 % | 79 % | 71 % |

Segment information

The segmental overview shows revenues from the bourse's business areas together with operating expenses distributed on the respective areas. "Other" includes the bourse's course programmes (Oslo Børs Institute).

Revenues from derivatives cover direct costs and to some extent overheads.

| | 1st Quarter 2003 | 1st Quarter 2002 | 2002 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Equity Markets | | | |
| Operating revenues | 21 596 | 25 212 | 94 270 |
| Operating profit | 3 256 | 5 167 | 13 069 |
| Fixed Income Markets | | | |
| Operating revenues | 6 822 | 6 365 | 24 045 |
| Operating profit | 2 796 | 2 878 | 8 515 |
| Derivatives Markets | | | |
| Operating revenues | 2 267 | 1 638 | 6 243 |
| Operating profit | -2 526 | -3 788 | -12 464 |
| Financial Market data | | | |
| Operating revenues | 21 186 | 24 600 | 91 741 |
| Operating profit | 9 098 | 10 165 | 41 709 |
| Other | | | |
| Operating revenues | 1 015 | 1 795 | 5 997 |
| Operating profit | -154 | 730 | 1 661 |
| Total operating revenues | 52 885 | 59 611 | 222 296 |
| Total operating profit | 12 470 | 15 151 | 52 490 |

Shareholder information
Price trend Oslo Børs Holding ASA:
Oslo Børs Holding vs OSEBX Priceindex


The graph shows the price trend for Oslo Børs Holding ASA, unadjusted for disbursed dividends and capital reduction. The price trend is compared with the OSEBX price index, which is also unadjusted for dividends.

10 largest shareholders as of 22 April 2003:

| Name | Nationality | No. of shares held | Ownership in percent |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. FIDELITY FUNDS | LUX | 500 000 | 10,00 |
| 2. ORKLA ASA | NOR | 499 500 | 9,99 |
| 3. GJENSIDIGE NOR SPARE | NOR | 483 512 | 9,67 |
| 4. MORGAN STANLEY (nominee account) | GBR | 479 262 | 9,58 |
| 5. DEN NORSKE BANK ASA | NOR | 432 833 | 8,65 |
| 6. NORSK HYDROS PENSJONSKASSE | NOR | 355 206 | 7,10 |
| 7. DANSKE BANK A/S (nominee account) | DNK | 200 000 | 4,00 |
| 8. KLP FORSIKRING | NOR | 200 000 | 4,00 |
| 9. INDUSTRIFORSIKRING | NOR | 130 000 | 2,60 |
| 10. STATE STREET (nominee account) | USA | 125 000 | 2,50 |
| Total 10 largest | | 3 405 313 | 68,09 |

Key figures

| | 1st Quarter 2003 | 1st Quarter 2002 | 2002 |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------|
| Financial | | | |
| Profit per share (NOK) | 2,05 | 2,62 | 8,60 |
| Cash flow per share before dividend and capital reduction | 13,63 | 9,31 | 5,57 |
| Net cash flow per share (NOK) | 13,63 | 9,31 | -12,43 |
| Return on equity | 18,5 % | 18,7 % | 17,6 % |
| Return on total capital | 17,0 % | 19,0 % | 18,8 % |
| Net operating margin | 23,6 % | 25,4 % | 23,6 % |
| Operational | | | |
| Benchmark index at end of period | 104,3 | 179,06 | 115,21 |
| Change in period | -9,7 % | 7,1 % | -31,1 % |
| Equities - no. of transactions (1000s) | 465 | 627 | 2 048 |
| Equities - value of turnover (NOK bn) | 102 | 129 | 444 |
| Market capitalisation of listed companies (NOKbn) | 466 | 725 | 503 |
| No. of companies listed | 196 | 202 | 204 |
| Change in period | -7 | -10 | -8 |
| Bonds - no. of listed issues | 844 | 843 | 838 |
| Derivatives - no. of contracts traded (1000s) | 870 | 775 | 3 176 |

The Board of Oslo Børs Holding ASA/Oslo Børs ASA

25 April 2003