

HOLD-Underperform

TP upside (downside) -6%

Close 25 May 2020

Price	VND 24,000
12M Target	VND 22,500
Previous Target	VND 25,530
Change	-12%

What's new?

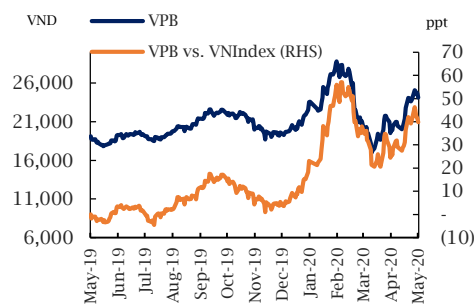
- We slash our earnings forecasts by 27% for 2020E and 15% for 2021E.
- We reduce our credit growth assumptions due to the impact of Covid-19.
- NIM will decrease due to reduced overall loan yields and recalibrated focus toward secured loans.

Our view

- Downgrade to HOLD-Underperform.
- VPB is trading at 1.1x 2020E P/BV, in line with the sector, while our reduced 2020E ROE of 16% is lower than the sector median of 18%.
- Risk to our view? FE Credit's IPO this year: We think it extremely unlikely, but we can't totally rule it out.

Company profile: VPB is a solid bank with strong capital, high historical profitability, and high quality management. CAR under Basel II was 11.1% as at 1Q20 and most of this is Tier Capital with 10.8%. However, its unsecured consumer subsidiary FE Credit, which represents 24% of loans and 43% of profits in 2019, is a key risk amid COVID 19.

Share price performance relative to VNIndex



Market cap	US\$2.5 bn
6M avg. daily turnover	US\$3.6 mn
Outstanding shares	2,438 mn
Free float	73%
FINI ownership	23.4%
Major shareholders	44.4%
2020E Asset/equity (x)	8.3
2020E P/E (x)	8.3
2020E P/B (x)	1.2
FOL remaining room	0.03%
Dividend yield (%)	0.0%

Source: Bloomberg, Yuanta Vietnam

Vietnam Prosperity Bank

Down-shifting to lower growth mode

Reduced loan growth assumptions. We expect loan growth throughout the sector to weaken due to the impact of the Covid-19. Thus, we lower our 2020E loan growth forecast for VPB by -1ppt to 11% YoY.

NIM forecasts reduced by 14bps to 8.56% for 2020E. VPB has cut its lending rates for certain borrowers in line with SBV policy. The impact on NIMs should be exacerbated by its decision to focus more on secured loans and less on unsecured consumer loans.

SBV requires banks to restructure loan terms for borrowers affected by COVID while retaining pre-outbreak asset quality categorizations. According to baodauthau.vn, VPB has restructured VND12 trillion or 4.5% of its 1Q20 total loans as of May 4; notably, these assets are not classified as NPLs.

We assume VPB's credit costs will increase regardless of the deferred classification downgrades. We expect VPB to prudently recognize provision for such restructured loans.

We slash our PATMI forecasts by -27% for 2020E and -15% for 2021E, largely on our increased credit cost assumptions and reduced net interest income, but tempered by lower forecasts for the bank's operating costs.

Our reduced PATMI forecast is 14% below consensus for 2020. Our reduced forecasts for 2020 implies an earnings decline of -14% YoY.

We downgrade to HOLD-U/P. VPB trades at 1.1x 2020E P/BV which is in line with the sector median while our reduced ROE of 16% is slightly lower than that the peer median of 18%. Our target implies -6% total shareholder returns, justifying our recommendation downgrade.

ANALYST CERTIFICATION AND IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES ARE LOCATED IN APPENDIX A.

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Market Valuations

Valuation Ratios	2017A	2018A	2019P	2020E	2021E	2022E
Adjusted PER (x)	8.3	8.0	7.2	8.3	6.5	5.6
PEG	3.2	2.1	0.6	(0.6)	0.2	0.4
Adj. ROA (%)	2.57%	2.45%	2.36%	1.81%	2.11%	2.15%
Adj. ROE (%)	27.8%	22.8%	21.5%	15.5%	17.0%	16.7%
PBR (x)	1.1	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.0	0.9
Dividend Yield (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	1.8%

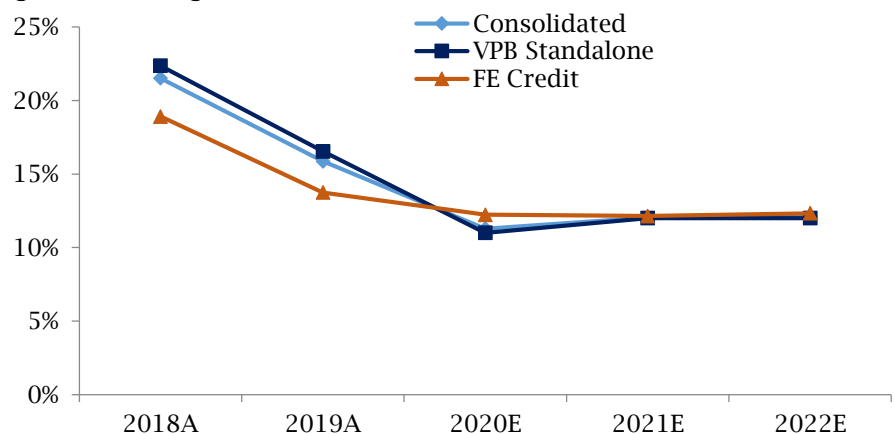
Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam

Reduced loan growth forecast

We cut our loan growth forecast by -1ppt to 11% in 2020E. VPB has been restructuring its loan portfolio to focus less on unsecured loans. As a result, unsecured loans as a proportion of total loans decreased by -2ppt from 34% in 2019 to 32% in 1Q20.

We believe that Covid-19 will impact FE Credit substantially because many of its customers (most of whom have relatively low incomes and are thus likely to be hard hit by Covid-19) will be unable to repay their loans. Thus, we strongly believe that FE Credit will focus on collections rather accelerating new loans growth amid COVID. We are not factoring in a rapid recovery in this business in the next two years as we expect the entire sector to take a pause in the medium term. Thus, we forecast loan growth at both VPB Bank (the parent) and FE Credit to decrease in 2020-22E from the relatively high levels of recent years.

Figure 1: Credit growth (%)



Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam.

Note: Credit growth in this chart excludes corporate bonds.

NIM forecasts slashed by 14bps to 8.56% for 2020E as VPB has reduced its lending rates in line with the SBV's policy to support enterprises that have been impacted by the coronavirus.

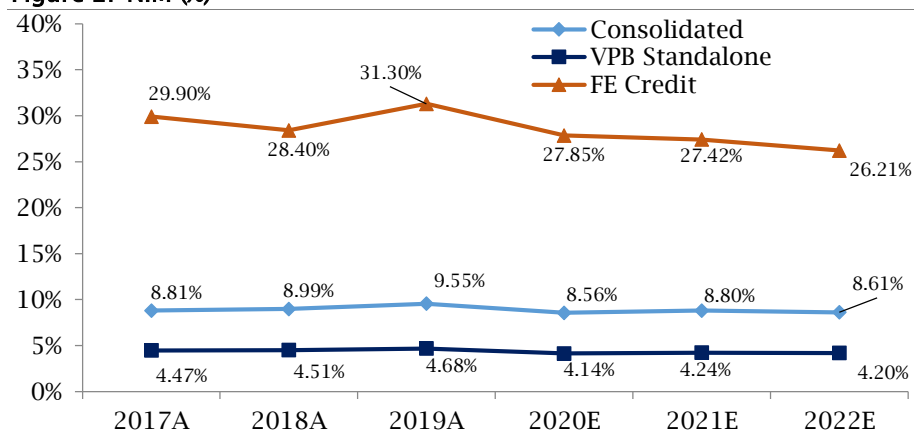
[The SBV announced its second policy rate cut](#) on May 12 to boost financial system liquidity. This rate cut will help reduce bank funding costs but also lower asset yields. On a net basis, VPB is not well positioned for the changed rate regime.

VPB's funding structure is relatively unattractive compared to its peers. The bank's CASA ratio of 12.2% (-1.1ppt YTD) as at 1Q20 was much lower peers such as [VCB \[BUY\]](#) (29.4%) or [MBB \[BUY\]](#) (33.1%), so reduced lending rates will have a more substantial constraining effect on its NIM.

We now forecast the bank's average lending rate to decrease from 15.5% in 2019A to 14.0% in 2020E (-1.5ppt YoY). As of May 4th 2020, VPB has cut interest rates ranging from 0.5ppt to 3.0ppt for about VND33 tn or 12.5% of its total loans as at 1Q20. Moreover, VPB has disbursed a new preferential loan package of VND18 tn or 6.8% of total loans as at 1Q20 with an average interest rate of up to 3ppt lower than that of the pre-pandemic period.

VPB has also restructured its loan portfolio to focus more on secured loans, which offer lower yields than those of unsecured loans.

Figure 2: NIM (%)



Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam.

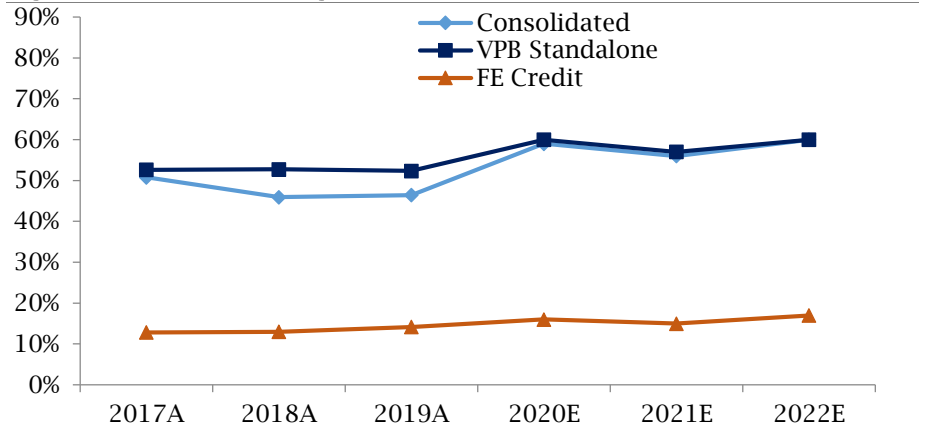
Rising credit costs. On the surface, rescheduling loan payments while maintaining debt categorizations should help constrain a rise in reported NPLs in 2020E. As such, we expect that reported NPLs, which are a lagging indicator of credit quality in normal times, will only start to increase in 2021E. However, regardless of arbitrary asset quality classifications, we believe that Vietnam’s more professionally managed banks (which include VPB) will prudently take provisions ahead of the eventual recognition of credit losses after the forbearance order has been lifted.

As of May 4th, 2020, VPB restructured VND12 tn of loans for clients that are affected by the pandemic (or 4.5% of the total loans as at 1Q20). Management expects 70%–80% of its restructured loans to recover if Covid-19 can be controlled by the end of 2Q20. So far, this seems to be a likely scenario, at least for Vietnam. We thus assume that 25% of the restructured loans (or approximately VND3 tn) will be recognized as new NPLs next year.

Regardless, we expect the bank to set aside higher provisions on an ongoing basis despite the lack of any change in reported NPLs in 2020E. Doing so would clearly be prudent, but increased provisioning would obviously dent earnings. Higher provisions would boost its observed coverage ratio substantially, but given the very likely rise in NPLs in 2021E, investors should take those numbers with a grain of salt.

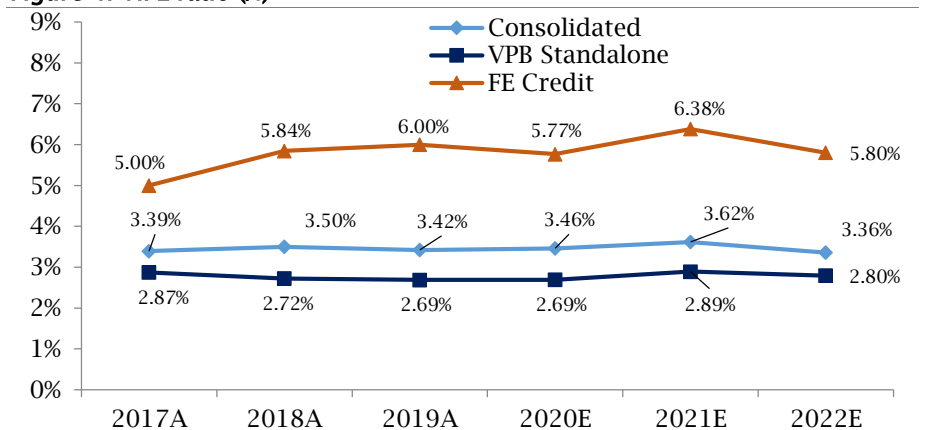
Provisioning costs increased +0.5% QoQ and +15.8% YoY to reach VND3.7 tn in 1Q20. The bank’s loan loss reserve (LLR) coverage ratio increased by +9ppt QoQ/+7ppt YoY to reach 55% in 1Q20. We believe that **VPB’s current LLR coverage of 55% is low** and the bank should increase provisions to weather the probable asset quality deterioration in upcoming quarters.

Figure 3: Provision coverage ratio (%)



Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam.

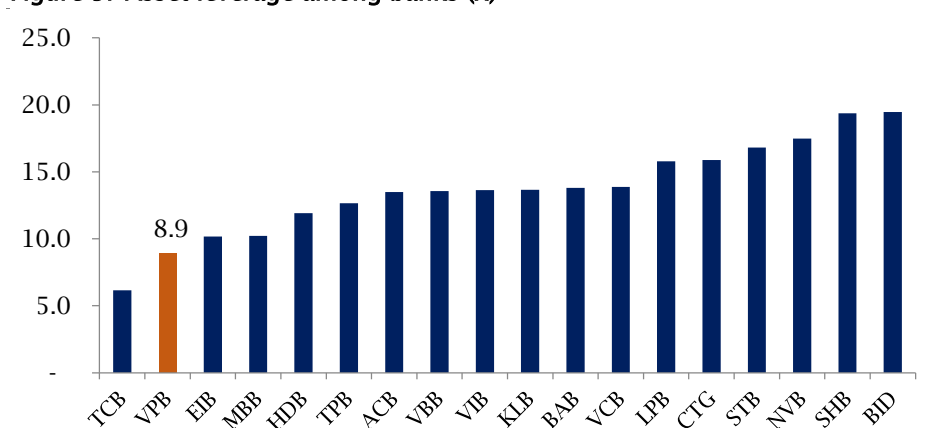
Figure 4: NPL ratio (%)



Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam.

Solid balance sheet: Low leverage and strong solvency capital should help VPB weather the storm. The bank's 1Q20 asset leverage of 8.9x is the second lowest in Vietnam. Total CAR (Basel II) was 11.1% at 1Q20, and most of this is Tier 1 capital (10.8%).

Figure 5: Asset leverage among banks (x)



Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam.

VPB's recent announcements on 122 mn shares buyback, \$300 mn bond repurchase, and locking the FOL room at 15% have created a few waves in the market.

VPB plans to buy back a **maximum of 5%** of the current shares outstanding (2,438 million shares) or equivalent to 122 million shares. The transaction is planned to occur in 2020 but the details about the date and price are unclear. We believe that the buyback is intended to support its share price, but it would

obviously reduce its capital strength at a moment of high macro uncertainty. (The bank's straight equity/asset of 11.3% in 1Q20 was the second highest in the sector.)

Gauging the wisdom of repurchasing shares here depends on one's confidence in the bank's management. In theory, buying back shares at low valuations and selling them at high valuations is a positive corporate governance move. However, we are not convinced that foreign investors (who probably got in at much higher price levels and who may have paid a 20–30% premium back when that was still in fashion) will be particularly pleased. On the other hand, no-one is being forced to sell (at least, not by the bank) as far as we are aware.

Our view is that the share buyback and bond repurchase plan are likely to prove opportunistically positive for VPB's long-term financial health assuming that 1) the repurchase prices are substantially below intrinsic fair value (which seems probable), 2) the macro headwinds do not require additional capital in the medium term (which seems likely given the bank's strong capital now), and 3) VPB is able to subsequently issue new shares (and debt) at a more attractive valuation in the future.

Valuation table

Valuation Methods	Average Fair Value (VND/share)		
	Estimated Price	Weight (%)	Price
Residual Income	22,541	50.0%	11,271
DDM Perpetuity	20,649	12.5%	2,581
DDM Multiple	21,488	12.5%	2,686
Regression	25,567	12.5%	3,196
Public Comps	22,143	12.5%	2,768
Estimated Fair Value			22,502

Residual Income approach

Terminal Net Income Growth Rate:	4.0%
Projected Net Income 1 Year After Period:	20,123
Residual Income Terminal Value:	12,839
(+) Current Common Shareholders' Equity:	44,524
(+) PV of Residual Income Terminal Value:	2,673
(+) Sum of PV of Residual Income:	7,754
Implied Equity Value:	54,950
Implied Share Price:	22,541

Source: Yuanta Vietnam

Sensitivity table: ROE vs. Cost of equity

Terminal Return on Common Equity:	Initial Cost of Equity (Declines by 0.40% Annually):						
	14.0%	14.5%	15.0%	15.4%	16.0%	16.5%	17.0%
14.5%	39,580	35,104	31,360	28,602	25,342	23,042	21,050
14.0%	37,757	33,518	29,973	27,360	24,271	22,091	20,202
13.5%	35,955	31,952	28,602	26,133	23,213	21,152	19,365
13.0%	34,176	30,405	27,248	24,921	22,168	20,224	18,538
12.0%	30,684	27,368	24,590	22,541	20,116	18,401	16,913
11.5%	28,971	25,878	23,286	21,374	19,108	17,506	16,115
11.0%	27,279	24,406	21,998	20,220	18,114	16,623	15,328
10.5%	25,608	22,953	20,726	19,081	17,131	15,750	14,550
10.0%	23,959	21,518	19,470	17,957	16,161	14,889	13,781

Source: Yuanta Vietnam

Yuanta vs. Consensus

Net income (VND bn)	2020E	2021E
Consensus mean	8,256	9,557
Yuanta forecast (adjusted)	7,087	9,127
<i>%ge difference</i>	<i>-14.2%</i>	<i>-4.5%</i>
Consensus high	9,658	12,398
Consensus low	6,329	7,300
EPS (VND)		
Consensus mean	3,393	4,024
Yuanta forecast (adjusted)	2,907	3,744
<i>%ge difference</i>	<i>-14.3%</i>	<i>-7.0%</i>
Consensus high	3,998	5,086
Consensus low	2,596	3,031

Source: Bloomberg, Yuanta Vietnam

Risk to our investment view

A successful IPO of FE Credit in 2020 would constitute an upside catalyst, and thus a risk to our call. We are highly doubtful that this will occur as planned in 2020 given the highly murky macroeconomic outlook for banks generally and unsecured lending especially. Simply put, we don't see where investor demand for a frontier market consumer finance stock will come from until the effects of COVID-19 have been fully cleared and the business is back on a growth trajectory. We haven't factored a recovery into our model, and we are extremely confident that it will not occur until sometime in the second half of 2021 at the very earliest. Overall, we believe the business risks (and the risks to our forecasts) are to the downside in 2020-21E, especially in terms of increasing NPLs and credit costs given the scale of the bank's unsecured consumer assets.

Key financial data (Old vs. New)

Balance Sheet (VND bn)	Old		New		% difference (New vs. Old)	
	2020E	2021E	2020E	2021E	2020E	2021E
Gross Loans:	288,819	323,705	286,222	320,668	-1%	-1%
Total Assets:	426,445	482,338	406,834	458,186	-5%	-5%
Deposits:	236,854	276,929	233,651	273,195	-1%	-1%
Total Liabilities:	376,668	422,366	357,537	400,219	-5%	-5%
Capital & Premium:	25,479	25,479	25,992	25,992	2%	2%
Total Equity:	49,777	59,973	49,297	57,967	-1%	-3%
Total Liabilities & Equity:	426,445	482,338	406,834	458,186	-5%	-5%

Income Statement (VND bn)	Old		New		% difference (New vs. Old)	
	2020E	2021E	2020E	2021E	2020E	2021E
Net interest income	31,942	36,317	31,087	35,560	-3%	-2%
Non-Interest income	3,401	4,242	4,770	5,374	40%	27%
Adj. TOI:	35,343	40,559	35,857	40,934	1%	1%
Total Expenses:	(13,117)	(14,944)	(12,073)	(14,085)	-8%	-6%
PPOP:	22,226	25,615	23,784	26,849	7%	5%
Net Provisions:	(10,153)	(12,199)	(14,925)	(15,440)	47%	27%
Pre-Tax Income:	12,073	13,416	8,859	11,408	-27%	-15%
(-) Tax:	(2,415)	(2,683)	(1,772)	(2,282)	-27%	-15%
Net Income	9,658	10,733	7,087	9,127	-27%	-15%
(-) Minority Interest	-	-	-	-	N/A	N/A
PATMI	9,658	10,733	7,087	9,127	-27%	-15%
Adj. Diluted EPS	3,962	4,403	2,907	3,744	-27%	-15%

Source: Yuanta Vietnam

Financial Statement (Revised)

Balance Sheet

(VND bn)	2018A	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
Cash & Balances at SBV	12,684	5,913	5,290	6,185	7,248
Loans to banks	16,571	20,098	18,677	21,838	25,591
Investment securities	47,301	56,073	61,938	72,420	84,866
Corporate bonds + others:	9,019	14,387	11,974	14,000	16,406
Gross Loans:	221,962	257,184	286,222	320,668	359,400
(-) Specific Provisions:	(2,042)	2,164	(3,875)	(4,290)	(4,773)
(-) General Provisions:	(1,525)	1,920	(1,967)	(2,203)	(2,470)
Total provisions:	(3,567)	(4,084)	(5,842)	(6,494)	(7,243)
Net Loans:	218,395	253,100	280,381	314,174	352,158
Fixed Tangible asset:	1,386	1,343	1,301	1,261	1,222
Intangible Assets:	578	580	580	580	580
Real estate investment	-	-	-	-	-
Accrued interests:	4,428	6,032	6,032	6,032	6,032
Deferred tax:	-	-	-	-	-
Other Assets:	12,930	19,678	20,661	21,694	22,779
Total Assets:	323,291	377,204	406,834	458,186	516,882
Deposits:	170,851	213,950	233,651	273,195	320,143
Due to SBV & banks:	58,013	50,887	42,322	47,415	53,142
Subordinated notes	48,658	57,600	57,600	57,600	57,600
Other Liabilities:	11,019	12,558	23,965	22,008	18,599
Total Liabilities:	288,541	334,994	357,537	400,219	449,484
Capital & Premium:	26,589	25,992	25,992	25,992	25,992
Reserves:	5,466	7,107	7,107	7,107	7,107
Treasury Shares	(2,492)	(2,696)	(2,696)	(2,696)	(2,696)
Retained Earnings:	5,187	11,806	18,893	27,563	36,993
Total Equity:	34,750	42,210	49,297	57,967	67,397
Total Liabilities & Equity:	323,291	377,204	406,834	458,186	516,882

Profit and Loss

(VND bn)	2018A	2019A	2020E	2021E	2022E
Net Interest income	24,702	30,670	31,087	35,560	39,421
<i>Net Fee Income</i>	<i>1,612</i>	<i>2,792</i>	<i>3,275</i>	<i>4,112</i>	<i>5,118</i>
<i>Other Non-It</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>874</i>	<i>1,495</i>	<i>1,261</i>	<i>958</i>
Total Non-It	1,703	3,665	4,770	5,374	6,076
TOI	26,404	34,336	35,857	40,934	45,497
Total expenses	(10,634)	(12,344)	(12,073)	(14,085)	(15,513)
PPOP:	15,770	21,992	23,784	26,849	29,984
Gross Provisions:	(11,253)	(13,688)	(16,598)	(17,285)	(19,454)
NPL Recoveries:	4,681	2,020	1,673	1,845	2,568
Net Provisions:	(6,572)	(11,668)	(14,925)	(15,440)	(16,887)
Pre-Tax Income:	9,199	10,324	8,859	11,408	13,097
(-) Income Tax:	(1,843)	(2,064)	(1,772)	(2,282)	(2,619)
Net Income	7,356	8,260	7,087	9,127	10,478
(-) Minority Interest	-	-	-	-	-
(-) Others	-	-	-	-	-
PATMI	7,356	8,260	7,087	9,127	10,478
Adjusted Diluted EPS	3,025	3,375	2,907	3,744	4,298

Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam

Selected Calculated Ratios (Revised)	FY17A	FY18A	FY19P	FY20E	FY21E	FY22E
GROWTH PROJECTIONS						
Net interest income	36%	20%	24%	1%	14%	11%
Fee Income	71%	10%	73%	17%	26%	24%
Other NII	-210%	-78%	867%	71%	-16%	-24%
Operating costs	31%	22%	16%	-2%	17%	10%
Provision	51%	41%	22%	21%	4%	13%
Pre-provision profit	53%	14%	39%	8%	13%	12%
Adjusted Net profit	72%	13%	12%	-14%	29%	15%
Assets	21%	16%	17%	8%	13%	13%
ASSET ANALYSIS						
Earning assets to total assets	92%	91%	92%	93%	94%	94%
Average Returns on Earnings Assets	2.78%	2.68%	2.57%	1.95%	2.26%	2.29%
LOAN ANALYSIS						
Loan growth (% YoY)	26%	22%	16%	11%	12%	12%
Loans to Interest Earnings Assets	70%	74%	73%	74%	73%	72%
DEPOSIT ANALYSIS						
Deposit growth (YoY %)	8%	28%	25%	9%	17%	17%
Deposits to Interest Bearing Liabilities	56%	61%	66%	70%	72%	74%
LIQUIDITY						
Pure LDR (Customer loan/deposit)	134%	128%	118%	120%	115%	110%
ASSET QUALITY						
NPL ratio	3.39%	3.50%	3.42%	3.46%	3.62%	3.36%
General Provisions to Gross loans	0.71%	0.69%	-0.75%	0.69%	0.69%	0.69%
LLR	51%	46%	46%	59%	56%	60%
SPREAD ANALYSIS						
Int. rate received on Average IEA	14.59%	14.65%	15.53%	14.05%	14.30%	14.21%
Int. rate paid on Average IBL	6.11%	6.04%	6.39%	6.07%	6.23%	6.32%
Interest rate spread	8.48%	8.61%	9.14%	7.98%	8.07%	7.89%
NIM	8.81%	8.99%	9.55%	8.56%	8.80%	8.61%
OTHER INCOME						
Fee income to total income	6%	6%	8%	9%	10%	11%
Other Non-IL to total Income	2%	0%	3%	4%	3%	2%
OPERATING EFFICIENCY						
Cost to income ratio	34.7%	34.2%	34.0%	32.2%	32.9%	32.3%
CREDIT COSTS						
Provision/avg. assets	1.13%	1.10%	1.08%	1.44%	1.42%	1.40%
PROFITABILITY						
Adj. ROAA	2.63%	2.45%	2.36%	1.81%	2.11%	2.15%
Adj. ROAE	28.4%	22.8%	21.5%	15.5%	17.0%	16.7%
Dividend Yield	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	1.8%
VALUATIONS						
PER (x)	8.3x	8.0x	7.2x	8.3x	6.5x	5.6x
PBR (x)	1.1x	1.7x	1.4x	1.2x	1.0x	0.9x

Source: Company data, Yuanta Vietnam

Appendix A: Important Disclosures

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BUY: We have a positive outlook on the stock based on our expected absolute or relative return over the investment period. Our thesis is based on our analysis of the company's outlook, financial performance, catalysts, valuation and risk profile. We recommend investors add to their position.

HOLD-Outperform: In our view, the stock's fundamentals are relatively more attractive than peers at the current price. Our thesis is based on our analysis of the company's outlook, financial performance, catalysts, valuation and risk profile.

HOLD-Underperform: In our view, the stock's fundamentals are relatively less attractive than peers at the current price. Our thesis is based on our analysis of the company's outlook, financial performance, catalysts, valuation and risk profile.

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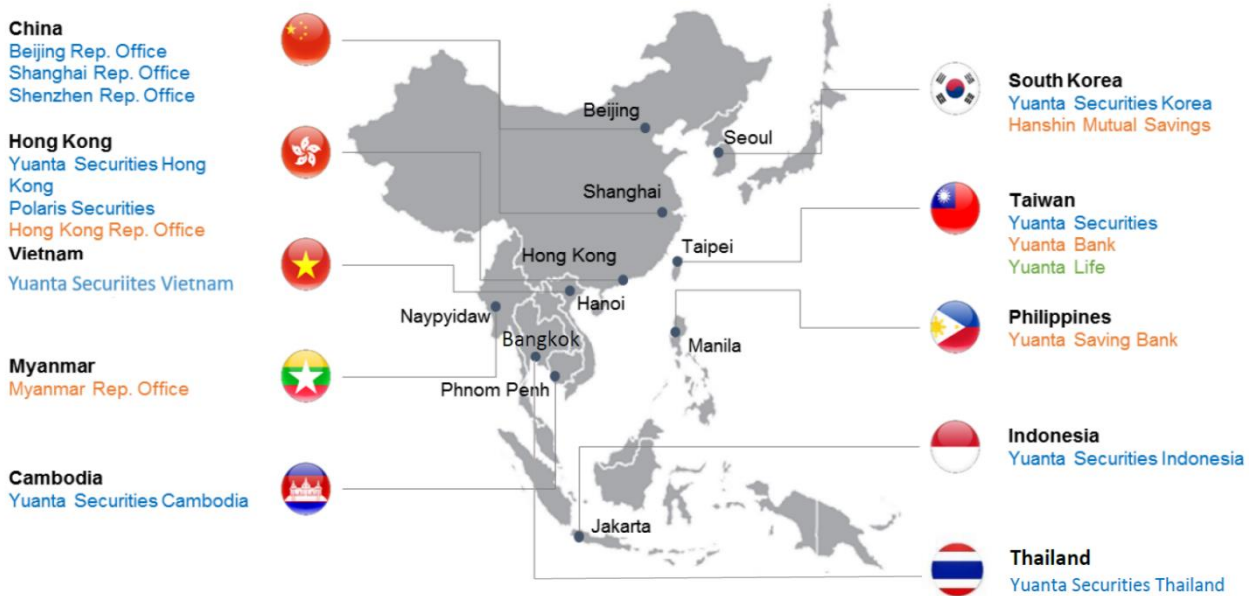
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