

#### Banks

Key data	
Price (DKK)	212
Country	Denmark
Bloomberg	SPKSJF DC
Reuters	SPKSJF.CO
Free float	79.0%
Market cap (DKKm)	3,675
No. of shares (m)	17.4
Next event	Q1: 2-May

\* Price as at 13:45 CET on 12 February 2024

CEO Lars Petersson CFO Jens Trane

#### Company description

Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn A/S provides banking products and services in Denmark. Its products and services include net banking, commercial insurance, mobile banking, rental of commercial lease, financing, insurance and pension.

#### Ownership structure

Sydbank A/S	5.3%
AP Pension	5.3%
Købstædernes Forsikring	5.2%

Source: Company data (9 February 2023)

#### Estimate changes

	24E	25E	26E
NII	5.7%	6.8%	n.m.
PPP	2.1%	1.3%	n.m.
EPS (adj.)	4.4%	2.2%	n.m.

Source: Danske Bank Equity Research estimates

#### Analyst(s)

Asbjørn Nicholas Mørk

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Important disclosures and certifications are contained from page 11 of this report

# Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn

A combination of self-made tailwinds and a strong home market

Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn delivered a strong Q4 report with rising net interest income, strong lending and deposit growth, solid activity and a firm grip on costs. Credit quality continues to look strong too. However, the best may be yet to come, with NII expected to grow another 16% in 2024, far more than other banks, while the Towards New Goals strategy delivers on top. We estimate 12-14% post-tax ROE for the coming years. We raise our fair value range to DKK275-312/share, 30-48% above current share price.

- Strong customer and earnings momentum more to come in 2024. Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn's Q4 23 saw a 37% y/y increase to NII, driven by strong 8% higher lending volumes y/y and 4% deposit growth. Both signal a continued attractive customer inflow and a home market that is benefiting greatly from the massive expansion of Danish pharma group Novo Nordisk. Other banks started seeing NII momentum softening during Q4 23, but Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn should be able to grow NII by a full 16% in 2024E, the highest of all banks in our coverage, driven by volume growth and higher portfolio income.
- Towards New Goals strategy to bring positive earnings jaws. Positive jaws for 2024 are driven by income growing much faster than costs. The ambitious cost/income target of below 50% by 2026 compares to 57% in 2023 which leaves additional earnings upside potential. We estimate 13% average post-tax ROE for 2024-25, materially above the 7% average ROE in 2018-2020. We estimate 2024E pre-tax profits of DKK776m, above the DKK650-755m guidance range, the main reason being expected higher NII and still low credit provisions. With comforting capital positions, the bank announced a DKK8 DPS for 2023 and we expect more buybacks to be announced during 2024.
- Credit quality remains very robust. Despite recession risks for 2024, the bank's credit
  quality remains very strong. 92% of all lending is categorised within the FSA's best two
  classes. We estimate DKK55m (30bp) of net loan loss provisions for 2024.
- Valuation. SPKSJF trades at a 2024E P/E of 6.3x. We estimate a fair value range of DKK275-312/share (DKK247-280), 30-48% above the current share price.

Year-end Dec (DKK)	2022	2023	2024E	2025E	2026E					
NII (m)	660	862	998	963	939	230 ]				1
Lending growth	-3.1%	8.2%	8.2%	4.1%	3.0%	220 -				٠.٨
Total revenues (m)	1,278	1,584	1,734	1,704	1,695	210 - 1				MI
Pre-provision profits (PPP) (m)	455	676	811	764	740	200		Л		A.A.
PPP growth	-6.1%	48.7%	19.9%	-5.8%	-3.1%	" M M	M	· www.	hypopor	ν
Loan losses (m)	16.0	-15.6	-54.9	-66.9	-69.0	190	nA An	27	ς"/	
PTP (m)	482	701	776	717	691	180 - M Y Y	Amm.	Μ.		
EPS (adj.)	20.1	29.2	33.4	31.9	31.7	170 - 170				
						160				
DPS	6.00	8.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	F M A M	JJA	s o	N D	J
Dividend yield	3.1%	4.0%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	-SPKSJF.CO	-MSCI E	urope/Ban	ıks rebase	d
C/I	64.4%	57.3%	53.3%	55.2%	56.3%					
PPP/avg. lending	3.83%	5.56%	6.16%	5.47%	5.12%		1M	3M	12M	5Y
Loan loss ratio	-0.13%	0.13%	0.42%	0.48%	0.48%	Absolute	-3%	7%	9%	1449
Equity tier-1 ratio	21.9	18.7	19.3	19.8	20.2	Rel. local market	-9%	-9%	-13%	10%
RoNTA	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	Rel. EU sector	-2%	2%	8%	116%
P/E (adj.) (x)	9.6	6.8	6.3	6.6	6.7					
P/NTA	0.95	0.86	0.81	0.74	0.69					

#### Investment case

In our view, Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn ticks all the boxes of a potentially attractive investment, diverging from the general earnings pressure that the sector is facing.

The bank has a clear niche strategy from its physical presence, with strong 11% customer inflow in recent years and a better ability than peers in converting customer inflow into both business volumes and AUM growth. Its home market is less competitive and it benefits from Totalkredit's lower mortgage prices. A Bankdata setup makes it a potential takeover target, but with clear financial targets, management is keen to deliver stand-alone.

After the bank successfully delivered on its 'New Ways' strategy, in H1 22 it announced a new strategy for 2022-26 named 'Towards New Goals'. Strong delivery in recent years adds comfort in management, and if Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn delivers by 2026, we see strong additional upside.

# The new targets are:

- Cost/income ratio below 50% by 2026
- ROE after tax of >10% for the period
- DPS equal to 25% of net profits with share buybacks on top
- A solvency capital ratio of at least 20% (24.3% at Q3 23)
- 4-8% annual growth to total business volumes.

# Valuation and methodology for deriving 12M target price

We value Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn using several valuation approaches, including a Gordon Growth model where we value the bank based on its normalised profitability capacity. We continue to apply 8.5-10.5% cost of capital and 55-75bp of normalised loan loss provisions to determine a fair value range.

#### Risks

#### Macroeconomic exposures

Like its peers, Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn is exposed to macroeconomic developments, including economic activity and interest rate levels.

# Higher costs

Management has a clear ambition of lowering costs in the coming years, while at the same time increasing business volumes and income. The bank has been able to lower full-time employees (FTEs) and hence costs in recent quarters, but general wage inflation and competition for key FTEs could drive costs higher.

#### A deterioration in credit quality

Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn has grown lending in recent years. Higher growth and new customer inflow could potentially trigger excessive risk taking and as a result higher loan loss provisions. Considering the lending portfolio churn in the past decade to a more residentially dominated lending book, we are not concerned, however.

# NII outlook continues to improve into 2024

NII came in at DKK239m in Q4, up 37% versus Q4 22. Higher rates had a material positive impact, but in Q4 volume growth started contributing significantly too. Bank lending rose as corporate lending improved due to continued SME customer inflow and increased investment need within this customer group. This has driven corporate lending 15% higher during 2023. Within residential clients, it is in particular car loans at attractive rates for electric vehicles that have driven residential lending higher. In addition, deposit volumes continue to grow, as savings ratios remain high among residential clients, demonstrating the sound and stable business the bank is running and the geographic location of the bank's home market being close to Novo Nordisk production facilities with strong local employment as a result.

With materially rising rates, Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn is now able to restore long-term prudent deposit margins and the structurally high excess deposit base is yielding a good return.

We are pleased to see that solid lending growth is driven by customer inflow, which also drives higher deposit volumes. As a result, the deposit surplus stood at DKK9bn.

The bank's customer base with fewer large corporate clients, means it has fewer money-market linked lending products which had until mid-2023 caused less NII tailwind than seen in larger peers. On the positive side, however, delayed phase-in of announced price hikes means that the bank still has solid NII tailwinds to come through into 2024.

In addition to lending and deposit effects, the bank's liquidity portfolio continues to benefit from rising rates too. The DKK10bn HTM is currently yielding less than 2% and with 1.5 years duration, it should reprice at least 1-2% during 2024-25, adding c.DKK50m to NII in 2024.

We estimate NII to grow from DKK862m in 2023 to DKK998m in 2024E, equal to a material 16% increase versus 2023 and 72% above the DKK582m level in 2021.

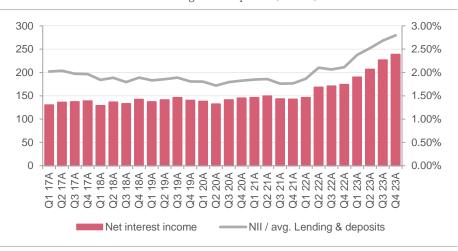


Chart 1. Net interest income and margin development (DKKm)

Source: Company data, Danske Bank Equity Research

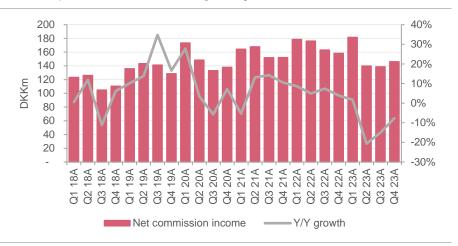
# Fee income tailwinds building for 2024

Fee and commission income came in at DKK146m, including dividend income. This was materially lower than the DKK174m level in Q4 22, but impacted by lower mortgage refinancing activity and lower house market activity. Remortgaging fees fell 21% y/y while trading & custody fees fell 30%. Leaving that aside, underlying fee income was relatively stable.

With c.80% of total fee income being driven by volumes rather than activity, fee income should continue to be resilient, even in a potential recession. In addition, AUM continues to grow driven

by benign market trends in Q4 and customer inflow. We also expect mortgage activity to increase in 2024.

Chart 1. Net fee and commission income, quarterly



Source: Company data, Danske Bank Equity Research

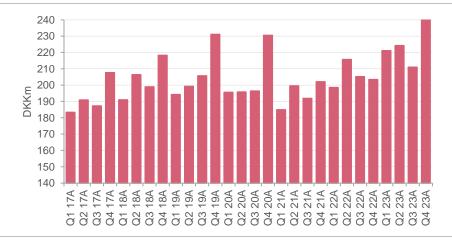
# Underlying costs delivery, but one-offs in 2023

Total costs were DKK252m in Q3 23, up materially y/y due to one-off costs, increased depreciation and higher staff costs as the bank has opened a new branch in Gilleleje recently while a new advisory and tech centre in Copenhagen is being established. Both are driving costs higher.

However, with cost initiatives taken in November 2023, the bank took out DKK45m of costs annually, and as a result, we expect modest cost growth of 2% in 2024 as the bank is chasing its 'Towards New Goals' strategy.

In our view, it is important that Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn clearly delivered on the cost plans in the former New Ways strategy, and we expect this cost focus to continue. We note that management still targets a cost/income ratio of 50% by end-2025 for the fiscal year 2026.

Chart 3. Cost development, quarterly

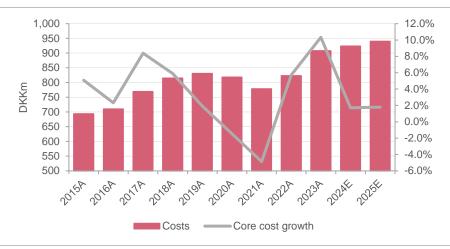


Source: Company data, Danske Bank Equity Research

Given inflation and rising credit demand, we argue that some rise in costs is expected. We prefer banks to invest in income growth when prudent, and in this case, we see good arguments for

investing further. After all, few banks have done as much as Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn in recent years when it comes to managing income and costs simultaneously.

Chart 4. Cost development, annually



Source: Company data, Danske Bank Equity Research estimates

# Credit quality could provide positive surprises ahead

Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn booked DKK4m (8bp) of loan loss reversals in Q4 23. Realised losses were low and credit quality continues to look strong.

Management-assessed provisions made up DKK178m, in order to maintain a prudent buffer towards potential future risks.

Measured on the FSA's rating scale, category '3' and '2a' make up 60% of the total lending book, which is very close to the highest ever recorded, which was in Q3 22. We note that employment remains high in the bank's home markets and the economic activity continues to be supportive.

Chart 5. Lending book composition by Danish FSA criteria



Source: Company data, Danske Bank Equity Research

Capital position remains strong. Dividend hiked materially.

The CET-1 stood at 16.4% at Q4 23, while the solvency capital ratio was a full 24.5%, well above the target of >20% solvency.

With such a strong capital position and a very solid credit book, we consider it only prudent that management is now actively increasing capital distribution.

Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn announced a DKK100m buyback on 10 August 2023. The buyback was completed in February 2024.

On the back of a strong 2023 result, the bank proposes a DKK8 DPS, a 33% increase versus the DKK6 DPS for 2022.

2024 guidance indicates a potential record year and could even be conservative

Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn expects pre-tax profits of DKK650-750m for 2024. This compares to DKK701m in 2023.

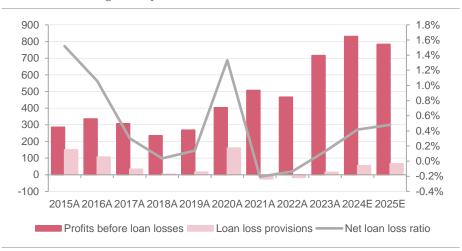
We estimate that Sparekasse Sjælland-Fyn may well beat its 2024E guidance and deliver pretax profits at DKK776m, driven by strong 16% NII growth and excellent credit quality.

# Rising core earnings remains key

In our view, the Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn investment case revolves around a low valuation combined with substantial improvements to core earnings and profits in the coming years. Very few banks have been able to deliver similar improvements to core operations, and the combined improvement since 2018 is impressive.

With the Towards New Goals strategy, we expect the bank to continue to demonstrate positive jaws on income versus costs going forward. In our view, it is key that management has set its own independent strategy for profitability improvements and does not simply rely on rising rates. That said, we see rising rates adding income tailwind to the underlying management improvements. The combination of the two is important, and as a result we estimate post-tax ROE of 13% on average for 2024-25E.

Chart 6. Core earnings development (DKKm)



Source: Company data, Danske Bank Equity Research estimates

# Fair value range largely unchanged

Our capital- and risk-adjusted Gordon Growth model returns a fair value range of DKK275-312/share with a mid-rage at DKK293. This is 30-48% above current share price. In the range, we continue to apply a cost of capital range of 10.5-11.5% and 70-90bp of normalised loan losses.

Table 1. Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn Gordon's Growth valuation range

				Normalise	d Ioan Io	ss ratio		
		0.50%	0.60%	0.70%	0.80%	0.90%	1.00%	1.10%
	9.5%	357	350	344	337	331	325	318
quity	10.0%	340	333	327	321	315	309	303
EQ.	10.5%	324	318	312	306	301	295	289
o —	11.0%	310	304	299	293	287	282	276
Cost	11.5%	297	291	286	281	275	270	265
ပိ	12.0%	285	280	275	269	264	259	254
	12.5%	274	269	264	259	254	249	244

#### Upside/downside vs. current share price 0.50% 0.80% 0.60% 0.70% 0.90% 1.00% 1.10% 9.5% 69% 66% 63% 60% 56% 53% 50% 10.0% 55% 52% 49% 61% 58% 46% 43% 10.5% 53% 50% 48% 45% 42% 39% 37% 11.0% 39% 33% 31% 46% 44% 41% 36% 11.5% 38% 33% 28% 25% 40% 35% 30%

27%

23%

25%

20%

23%

18%

20%

16%

30%

25%

Note: Prices as at 12:00 CET on 12 February 2024 Source: Danske Bank Equity Research estimates.

35%

29%

32%

27%

Cost of Equity

12.0%

12.5%

Table 2. Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn, annual data

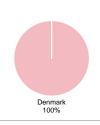
DKKm	2018A	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022A	2023A	2024E	2025E	2026E
Net interest income	541	565	557	582	660	862	998	963	939
Net commission income	464	549	592	636	676	606	636	641	656
NII and net fee income	1,005	1,113	1,149	1,218	1,335	1,468	1,634	1,604	1,595
Core capital gains	21	-44	16	30	-73	98	80	80	80
Other income	16	27	21	16	16	18	20	20	20
Total core income	1,042	1,097	1,186	1,263	1,278	1,584	1,734	1,704	1,695
Core banking costs	-815	-830	-818	-779	-823	-908	-924	-940	-954
Profits, associated companies	8	2	35	22	11	40	20	20	20
Profits before loan losses	235	268	403	506	466	716	831	784	760
Loan loss provisions	-4	-17	-161	25	16	-16	-55	-67	-69
Core earnings after loan losses	230	251	242	531	482	701	776	717	691
Net Extraordinary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pretax profits	230	251	242	531	482	701	776	717	691
Tax	-22	-25	-13	-87	-110	-142	-155	-158	-152
Net profits before AT-1costs	208	227	229	444	372	558	621	559	539
Minority interests / AT-1	-60	-24	-24	-25	-26	-43	-24	-24	-24
Net profits	148	202	204	419	346	515	597	535	515
Normalised profits	107	208	167	395	350	504	550	507	487
EPS, net profits	10.4	11.6	11.8	24.1	19.9	29.9	36.2	33.6	33.5
EPS, adj.	7.5	12.0	9.6	22.7	20.1	29.2	33.4	31.9	31.7
BV/Share	155	164	172	196	208	238	266	290	315
NTA/share	148	159	167	191	203	232	260	284	309
No. of shares, year-end	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	16.9	16.5	15.9	15.4
No. of shares, average	14.2	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.3	16.5	15.9	15.4
Tier-1ratio	15.1%	16.2%	18.4%	19.7%	21.9%	18.7%	19.3%	19.8%	20.2%
CET-1ratio	13.0%	14.0%	16.1%	17.5%	18.9%	16.4%	17.1%	17.6%	18.1%
RoNAV	6.4%	7.6%	7.2%	13.5%	10.1%	13.8%	14.5%	12.1%	11.1%
Return on Equity	6.0%	7.3%	7.0%	13.1%	9.8%	13.5%	14.2%	11.9%	10.9%
Return on Equity, before tax	8.5%	8.8%	8.1%	15.6%	13.3%	17.4%	17.7%	15.5%	14.3%
Cost/Income ratio	78%	76%	69%	62%	64%	57%	53%	55%	56%
Lending	12,174	12,217	11,951	12,067	11,690	12,645	13,687	14,243	14,675
Deposits from customers	18,223	18,700	20,001	19,766	20,673	21,399	22,268	23,172	23,639
NII / avg. Lending & deposits	184%	1.84%	1.77%	1.82%	2.05%	2.60%	2.85%	2.62%	2.48%
Loan loss ratio, lending +guarantees	0.03%	0.09%	0.84%	-0.13%	-0.09%	0.09%	0.30%	0.35%	0.35%
REA	17,639	17,343	16,799	17,017	16,443	17,105	17,886	18,429	18,988
Buyback announcement	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	150	150
Dividend per share	2.5	3.0	0.0	6.0	6.0	8.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Total cash distribution (div +buybacks com	43	52	0	104	104	235	248	293	288

Note: per share data in DKK

 $Source: Company\ data,\ Danske\ Bank\ Equity\ Research\ estimates$ 

# Company summary

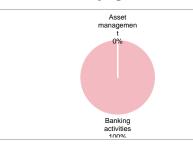
# Income breakdown by geographical area



# Company information

Sparekassen Sjælland-Fyn Isefjord Allé 5, 3200 Holbæk Denmark www.spks.dk

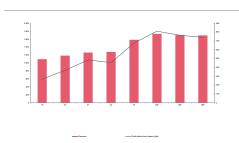
#### Income breakdown by segment



## Main shareholders

Name	Votes (%)	Capital (%)
Sydbank A/S	0.1%	5.3%
AP Pension	0.1%	5.3%
Købstædernes Forsikring	0.1%	5.2%

# Revenue and profit before loan losses (DKKm) $\,$



# Loan loss ratio and profit before loan losses (DKKm)



Source: FactSet, Company data, Danske Bank Equity Research estimates

# Summary tables

INCOME STATEMENT										
Year end Dec, DKKm	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024E	2025E
Net interest income	551	542	541	565	557	582	660	862	998	963
Commissions	421	457	464	549	592	636	676	606	636	641
Total revenues	1,043	1,073	1,042	1,097	1,186	1,263	1,278	1,584	1,734	1,704
Costs	-710	-769	-815	-830	-818	-779	-823	-908	-924	-940
Pre-provision profits (PPP)	333	304	227	267	368	484	455	676	811	764
Loan losses	-107	-33.4	-4.4	-16.9	-161	24.8	16.0	-15.6	-54.9	-66.9
Pre-tax profit	228	273	230	251	242	531	482	701	776	717
Net profit	159	201	148	202	204	419	346	515	597	535
Net profit (adj.)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
BALANCE SHEET										
DKKm	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024E	2025E
Lending	10,474	11,681	12,174	12,217	11,951	12,067	11,690	12,645	13,687	14,243
Other interest bearing assets	7,209	7,127	8,442	9,573	11,444	11,517	13,784	14,648	14,943	15,244
Goodwill	150	138	125	91.3	91.3	91.2	91.2	91.2	91.2	91.2
Total assets	19,859	21,487	23,857	25,359	27,266	28,001	29,631	31,700	33,111	34,043
Deposits from public	15,647	16,589	18,223	18,700	20,001	19,766	20,673	21,399	22,268	23,172
Wholesale funding	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	199	378	378	612	625	637
Subordinated debt	466	403	454	673	570	670	571	555	567	578
Equity	2,058	2,228	2,697	2,851	2,996	3,410	3,621	4,016	4,377	4,614
NTA	1,908	2,090	2,572	2,760	2,905	3,318	3,530	3,925	4,286	4,523
PER SHARE DATA	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024E	2025E
No. of shares, fully diluted YE (m)	12.9	13.2	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	16.9	16.5	15.9
No. of shares, fully diluted avg. (m)	12.9	13.0	14.2	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.4	17.3	16.5	15.9
EPS (reported) (DKK)	12.3	15.4	10.4	11.6	11.8	24.1	19.9	29.9	36.2	33.6
EPS (adj.) (DKK)	10.5	13.2	7.51	12.0	9.58	22.7	20.1	29.2	33.4	31.9
DPS (DKK)	3.10	0.00	2.50	3.00	0.00	6.00	6.00	8.00	9.00	9.00
Book value per share (DKK)	159	169	155	164	172	196	208	238	266	290
MARGINS AND GROWTH	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024E	2025E	2026E
C/I, adjusted	71.7%	78.2%	75.7%	69.0%	61.7%	64.4%	57.3%	53.3%	55.2%	56.3%
NII/avg. lending	4.9%	4.5%	4.6%	4.6%	4.8%	5.6%	7.1%	7.6%	6.9%	6.5%
Loan loss ratio	0.30%	0.04%	0.14%	1.33%	-0.21%	-0.13%	0.13%	0.42%	0.48%	0.48%
NII growth	-1.6%	-0.3%	4.4%	-1.4%	4.4%	13.4%	30.8%	15.7%	-3.5%	-2.5%
Revenue growth	2.9%	-2.9%	5.3%	8.1%	6.5%	1.2%	24.0%	9.5%	-1.8%	-0.5%
Cost growth	-8.4%	-5.9%	-1.9%	1.5%	4.9%	-5.7%	-10.3%	-1.7%	-1.8%	-1.5%
PPP growth	-8.8%	-25.3%	17.3%	38.0%	31.7%	-6.1%	48.7%	19.9%	-5.8%	-3.1%
RWA growth	7.0%	3.9%	-1.7%	-3.1%	1.3%	-3.4%	4.0%	4.6%	3.0%	3.0%
PROFITABILITY	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024E	2025E
RoE, reported profits	8.0%	9.4%	6.0%	7.3%	7.0%	13.1%	9.8%	13.4%	14.4%	12.1%
RoNTA, adj. profits	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Tier-1	9.9%	10.7%	13.0%	14.0%	16.1%	17.5%	18.9%	16.4%	17.1%	17.6%
Equity tier-1	12.9%	14.0%	15.1%	16.2%	18.4%	19.7%	21.9%	18.7%	19.3%	19.8%
RWA	15,858	16,973	17,639	17,343	16,799	17,017	16,443	17,105	17,886	18,429
VALUATION	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024E	2025E
Share price (DKK)	106	114	80.4	89.6	90.0	165	194	200	212	212
Market cap (DKKm)	1,376	1,497	1,397	1,557	1,564	2,867	3,362	3,378	3,486	3,363
P/E (reported) (x)	8.6	7.4	7.7	7.7	7.7	6.8	9.7	6.7	5.8	6.3
P/E (adj.) (x)	10.1	8.6	10.7	7.5	9.4	7.3	9.6	6.8	6.3	6.6
P/BV (x)	0.67	0.67	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.84	0.93	0.84	0.80	0.73
P/NTA (x)	0.72	0.72	0.54	0.56	0.54	0.86	0.95	0.86	0.81	0.74
Dividend yield	2.9%		3.1%	3.3%		3.6%	3.1%	4.0%	4.3%	4.3%
Total yield (incl. buybacks)	2.9%		3.1%	3.3%		3.6%	3.1%	6.9%	7.1%	8.7%

 $Source: Company\ data, Danske\ Bank\ Equity\ Research\ estimates$ 

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