

## LyondellBasell (LYB)

**\$46.07** (As of 03/12/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$39.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

**Zacks Recommendation:** Underperform

(Since: 02/05/20)

Prior Recommendation: Neutral

Short Term: 1-3 Months

**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)

**4-Sell**

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:B

Value: A

Growth: C

Momentum: B

### Summary

Earnings estimates for LyondellBasell for the first quarter of 2020 have been going down over the past month. The company is seeing certain challenges in the Intermediates and Derivatives business. A well-supplied market for its Intermediate Chemicals business has put pressure on margins in the segment. Moreover, lower volumes and planned maintenance activities are hurting the company's margins. LyondellBasell is also exposed to raw material cost pressure and volatility in energy costs, which account for a major portion of its operating costs. Relatively higher feedstock costs and lower propylene prices are affecting Olefins results. Also, higher feedstock costs are denting ethylene margins. Declining profitability in the company's Olefins & Polyolefins - Americas business is another matter of concern.

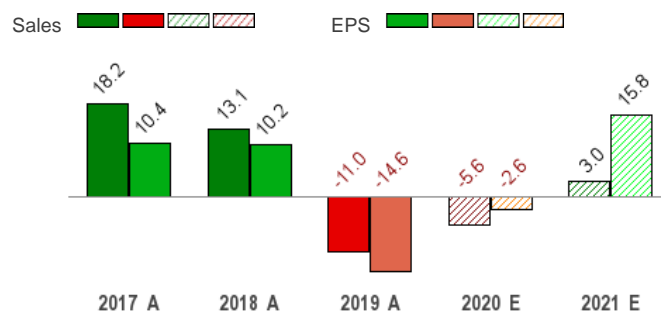
### Price, Consensus & Surprise



### Data Overview

52 Week High-Low	\$98.91 - \$45.06
20 Day Average Volume (sh)	3,061,271
Market Cap	\$15.4 B
YTD Price Change	-51.2%
Beta	1.36
Dividend / Div Yld	\$4.20 / 9.1%
Industry	<a href="#">Chemical - Diversified</a>
Zacks Industry Rank	Bottom 9% (231 out of 253)

### Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	-15.5%
Last Sales Surprise	-3.0%
EPS F1 Est- 4 week change	-6.4%
Expected Report Date	04/24/2020
Earnings ESP	2.0%
P/E TTM	4.8
P/E F1	4.9
PEG F1	0.6
P/S TTM	0.4

### Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021					33,771 E
2020	8,179 E	8,508 E	8,629 E	8,396 E	32,782 E
2019	8,778 A	9,048 A	8,722 A	8,179 A	34,727 A

### EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021					\$10.85 E
2020	\$1.98 E	\$2.55 E	\$2.66 E	\$2.19 E	\$9.37 E
2019	\$2.22 A	\$2.75 A	\$2.70 A	\$1.91 A	\$9.62 A

\*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and Sales estimates, is as of 03/12/2020. The reports text is as of 03/13/2020.

## Overview

Based in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, LyondellBasell Industries N.V. is among the leading plastics, chemical and refining companies globally with operations across 18 countries. The company's products are used across a bevy of industries including electronics, automotive parts, packaging, construction materials and biofuels.

LyondellBasell, which emerged from Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2010, is among the leading global producers of olefins and polyethylene. It is the world's second largest producer of polypropylene. It generated revenues of roughly \$34.7 billion in 2019.

LyondellBasell operates through six segments – Olefins & Polyolefins – Americas; Olefins & Polyolefins - Europe, Asia, International; Intermediates and Derivatives; Advanced Polymer Solutions; Refining; and Technology.

The Olefins & Polyolefins – Americas (21% of 2019 sales) division makes and markets olefins, including ethylene and ethylene co-products, and polyolefins.

The Olefins & Polyolefins - Europe, Asia, International unit (24%) is engaged in the production and distribution of olefins, including ethylene and ethylene co-products, polyolefins and polypropylene compounds.

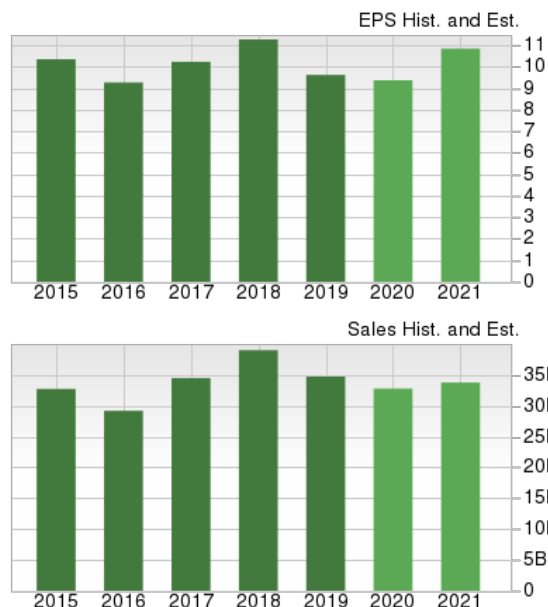
The Intermediates and Derivatives segment (20%) manufactures propylene oxide (PO) and its co-products and derivatives, acetyls, including methanol, ethanol, ethylene oxide and its derivatives, and oxygenated fuels (oxyfuels).

The Advanced Polymer Solutions segment (12%) manufactures and markets Compounding & Solutions and Advanced Polymers.

The Refining segment (21%) refines heavy, high-sulfur crude oil and different types of other crude oils as well as sources available on the U.S. Gulf Coast. The company's Houston refinery in Texas has been designed to refine heavy, high-sulfur crude oil.

LyondellBasell's Technology segment (2%) develops and licenses chemical and polyolefin process technologies and also makes and distributes polyolefin catalysts.

LyondellBasell has acquired A. Schulman, Inc. in a deal worth \$2.25 billion. The deal was closed on August 2018 and results from the new business are included prospectively.



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## Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ The company is seeing certain challenges in the Intermediates and Derivatives business. Results of the segment were affected by declining margins in the last reported quarter. A well-supplied market for its Intermediate Chemicals business has put pressure on margins. On a year-over-year and sequential-comparison basis, Intermediate Chemicals results declined in the fourth quarter of 2019. This was due to a margin fall in all businesses as well as lower volumes stemming from planned maintenance activities. Going forward, the company expects planned maintenance activities to hurt EBITDA in this segment by roughly \$10 million in the first and the second quarter of 2020; and \$25 million in the third and the fourth quarter.
- ▼ LyondellBasell is exposed to volatility in raw material and energy costs that account for a major portion of its operating costs. In the last reported quarter, relatively higher feedstock costs and lower propylene prices impacted Olefins results sequentially in the Olefins and Polyolefins Americas segment. In the Olefins & Polyolefins — Europe, Asia, International segment, ethylene margins declined due to higher feedstock costs in fourth-quarter 2019. As such, volatility in raw material and energy costs may continue to remain a headwind in the short haul.
- ▼ Declining margins in the Olefins & Polyolefins — Americas segment is a concern. EBITDA of the segment fell 21.1% year over year in the fourth quarter and declined 16.7% year over year in 2019. The company has planned maintenance schedule activities for 2020 that will continue to hurt margins. A cracker turnaround in the segment that will overlap in the first and the second quarter is expected to hurt EBITDA by \$25 million and \$30 million, respectively.

LyondellBasell is seeing certain challenges in the Intermediates and Derivatives business. It is exposed to raw material cost pressure. It is also seeing pressure in the O&P - Americas business.

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## Risks

- LyondellBasell is benefitting from the favorable North American natural gas environment. It is executing its expansion projects to leverage the U.S. natural gas liquids (NGLs) advantage. The construction of LyondellBasell's new high-density polyethylene (HDPE) plant on the U.S. Gulf Coast is complete. It will employ the company's proprietary Hyperzone PE technology and has an annual capacity of 1.1 billion pounds. LyondellBasell is also constructing a world scale plant on the U.S. Gulf Coast for producing propylene oxide (PO) and tertiary butyl alcohol (TBA). The plant will have annual capacity of 1 billion pounds of PO and 2.2 billion pounds of TBA and its derivatives. The PO/TBA plant is on track for completion in the second half of 2021.
  - LyondellBasell has purchased A. Schulman in a deal worth \$2.25 billion, a move that creates a premier global provider of advanced polymer solutions with extensive geographic reach, leading technologies and a diverse product portfolio. A. Schulman is a leading supplier of high-performance plastic compounds, composites and powders. The buyout doubles the size of LyondellBasell's existing compounding business and creates a platform for future growth with reach into additional high-growth markets such as packaging and consumer products, electronics and appliances, building and construction, and agriculture. LyondellBasell expects to capture \$200 million in annual run-rate cost synergies within two years. The buyout is also expected to be accretive to earnings within the first full year following its closure. The integration of A. Schulman is progressing well. At the end of Dec 31 2019, the company has captured \$130 million in forward annualized run rate synergies.
  - LyondellBasell remains committed to deliver greater value to its shareholders leveraging healthy cash flows. The company generated cash flows from operations of roughly \$5 billion in 2019. In 2019, the company paid out dividends worth \$1.5 billion. It also repurchased 42.7 million ordinary shares during the year. The company had 333 million common shares outstanding at the end of 2019.
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## Last Earnings Report

### LyondellBasell's Earnings & Sales Lag Estimates in Q4

LyondellBasell posted profits of \$612 million or \$1.83 per share in fourth-quarter 2019 compared with \$692 million or \$1.79 in the year-ago quarter.

Barring one-time items, adjusted earnings came in at \$1.91 per share that missed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$2.26.

Revenues fell 7.9% year over year to \$8,179 million in the reported quarter. The figure also trailed the consensus mark of \$8,427.1 million.

Consolidated EBITDA fell 3.3% year over year to \$1,172 million.

In the fourth quarter, results in most of the segments were affected by a slowdown in industrial demand as well as normal seasonality.

### 2019 Highlights

In 2019, total revenues fell 11% year over year to \$34,727 million. Net earnings came in at \$3,397 million or \$9.58 per share for the year, down from \$4,690 million or \$12.01 in 2018.

### Segment Review

In the **Olefins & Polyolefins — Americas** division, EBITDA fell 21.1% year over year to \$498 million. Olefin results increased more than \$60 million year over year. The company stated that ethylene margin expanded as lower feedstock costs were partly offset by a lower propylene price. Polyolefin results dropped around \$235 million mainly due to spread decline in polypropylene and polyethylene.

The **Olefins & Polyolefins — Europe, Asia, International** segment witnessed a rise in EBITDA of 13.4% year over year to \$144 million. Olefin remained flat on a year-over-year basis. Per the company, volumes were boosted by improved reliability with unplanned and planned maintenance affecting fourth-quarter 2018 results. This was offset by a decline in margin.

The **Advanced Polymer Solutions (APS)** segment saw a decline in EBITDA to \$54 million from \$86 million in the year-ago quarter. Volumes were affected by softness in automotive market. Advanced Polymers margins declined by \$10 million due to lower volumes.

EBITDA in the **Intermediates and Derivatives** segment went down 13.2% on a year-over-year basis to \$329 million. Propylene Oxide & Derivatives results were affected by sales mix, which were partly offset by higher volumes. Volumes rose due to scheduled maintenance in fourth-quarter 2018.

EBITDA in the **Refining** segment were \$22 million in the reported quarter against a loss of \$84 million in the year-ago quarter. The company stated that Maya 2-1-1 crack spread rose considerably year over year in the fourth quarter to \$19.44 per barrel. However, margin improvements from the Maya 2-1-1 crack spread was partly offset by higher prices of heavy sour crude oil bought in the U.S. Gulf Coast market. Also, the Houston Refinery operated at 267,000 barrels per day, up 45.1% year over year, due to the completion of planned maintenance in second-half 2018.

The **Technology** segment's EBITDA rose to \$138 million in the reported quarter from \$68 million a year ago, mainly due to higher licensing revenues.

### Financials

As of Dec 31, 2019, LyondellBasell had cash and liquid investments of \$1.1 billion.

In 2019, the company paid out dividends worth \$1.5 billion. It also repurchased 42.7 million ordinary shares during the year. The company had 333 million common shares outstanding as of Dec 31, 2019.

### Outlook

LyondellBasell expects to witness normal seasonal improvements in its businesses gradually through the second and the third quarter of 2020. The company believes that a rebound in industrial demand as well as favorable resolution of trade policies will provide substantial upside for the industry. It believes that the foundations of cost management, operational excellence and disciplined capital allocation will continue to serve amid the current challenging environment.

Considering the completion of its new Hyperzone project and the expected benefits from the IMO 2020 regulations, the company expects to extend its impressive track record of generating cash.

Quarter Ending **12/2019**

Report Date	Jan 31, 2020
Sales Surprise	-2.95%
EPS Surprise	-15.49%
Quarterly EPS	1.91
Annual EPS (TTM)	9.58

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## Recent News

### **LyondellBasell and Bora Sign Deal to Form JV in China - Mar 6, 2020**

LyondellBasell announced that it signed a definitive deal with Liaoning Bora Enterprise Group (Bora) to expand in China through a 50:50 joint venture (JV).

Notably, LyondellBasell and Bora initially signed a memorandum of understanding on Sep 5, 2019, and declared their plans to form the JV during a ceremony in Panjin, China.

LyondellBasell said that the combination of the operational excellence of Bora and the leading technology of LyondellBasell will enable them to manufacture polyolefin products efficiently and provide it to local customers.

Per the agreement, the partners will form a Sino-foreign JV — the Bora LyondellBasell Petrochemical Co. Ltd.

Notably, Bora LyondellBasell Petrochemical will operate a 1.1-million metric tons per year ethylene cracker and related polyolefin derivatives complex in Panjin, China. It is estimated to witness overall costs of around \$2.6 billion. Reportedly, the complex will produce products that meet the rising demands of different industries in China such as transportation, packaging, building and construction, healthcare, and hygiene.

LyondellBasell will market the high-density polyethylene and polypropylene, manufactured using its Spheripol, Spherizone polypropylene technologies and Hostalen ACP polyethylene technology. The start-up is anticipated in the second half of 2020.

### **LyondellBasell's Spheripol Chosen by Hyosung for New Plant - Mar 4, 2020**

LyondellBasell announced that Hyosung Vina Chemicals Co., Ltd. will use the Spheripol technology of LyondellBasell for a new facility.

The process technology is expected to be utilized for a 300-KTA polypropylene plant. Notably, the plant will be built at Cai Mep Industrial Zone in Vung Tau Province, Vietnam.

Per management, the additional award for LyondellBasell's Spheripol technology from Hyosung showcases how optimistic operators are with the licensing offer. Notably, the unparalleled licensing track record of its portfolio of polyolefin technology makes the Spheripol process the technology of choice in the polyolefin industry.

### **LyondellBasell Grants Hostalen ACP License to Shandong Jinhai – Jan 7, 2020**

LyondellBasell has announced that Shandong Jinhai Chemical Co., Ltd. will use its Hostalen 'Advanced Cascade Process' (Hostalen ACP) technology for a new facility.

The Hostalen ACP is a low-pressure slurry process technology that manufactures high performance, multi-modal high-density polyethylene (HDPE) resins with increased toughness balance, high stress cracking resistance and impact resistance. The technology is used in pressure pipe, blow molding and film applications.

The technology will be used for a 400 kilo tons per annum (KTA) HDPE facility that will be built in Heze City, Shandong Province, P.R. China. With the latest capacity additions, LyondellBasell has now provided license to more than 8000 KTA of benchmark multi-modal HDPE resins.

The Shandong Jinhai facility will start operations using Avant Z509 and Avant Z501 catalysts to make a complete range of multi-modal HDPE products.

The new licensees are expected to benefit from LyondellBasell's in-house expertise of continuous product and process improvement, which can be availed by optionally joining the company's Technical Service program.

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## Valuation

LyondellBasell's shares are down 47.3% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks Chemicals-Diversified industry and the Zacks Basic Materials sector are down 48.3% and 29.7% over the past year, respectively.

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The S&P 500 index is down 3.4% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 5.06X trailing 12-month enterprise value-to EBITDA (EV/EBITDA) ratio, which compares to 6.54X for the Zacks sub-industry, 7.15X for the Zacks sector and 10.17X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 9.2X and as low as 4.98X, with a 5-year median of 6.83X.

Our Underperform recommendation indicates that the stock will perform worse than the market. Our \$39 price target reflects 3.84X forward 12-month earnings per share.

The table below shows summary valuation data for LYB:

Valuation Multiples - LYB					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	5.06	6.54	7.15	10.17
	5-Year High	9.2	13.36	17.92	12.87
	5-Year Low	4.98	5.43	7.15	8.31
	5-Year Median	6.83	7.59	10.88	10.79
P/E F12M	Current	4.54	9.68	10.14	15.84
	5-Year High	13.04	15.18	21.15	19.34
	5-Year Low	4.54	8.25	9.82	15.18
	5-Year Median	8.71	12.28	13.51	17.42
P/B TTM	Current	1.91	1.03	1.36	3.69
	5-Year High	6.69	3.55	3.54	4.56
	5-Year Low	1.91	0.89	1.34	2.85
	5-Year Median	5.05	2.43	2.17	3.63

As of 03/12/2020

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## Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Bottom 9% (231 out of 253)



## Top Peers

Air Products and Chemicals, Inc. (APD)	Neutral
Huntsman Corporation (HUN)	Neutral
SINOPEC Shanghai Petrochemical Company, Ltd. (SHI)	Neutral
Exxon Mobil Corporation (XOM)	Neutral
BASF SE (BASFY)	Underperform
Dow Inc. (DOW)	Underperform
Eastman Chemical Company (EMN)	Underperform
Westlake Chemical Corporation (WLK)	Underperform

Industry Comparison Industry: Chemical - Diversified				Industry Peers		
	LYB Underperform	X Industry	S&P 500	APD Neutral	EMN Underperform	WLK Underperform
<b>VGM Score</b>	<b>B</b>	-	-	<b>D</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>D</b>
Market Cap	15.37 B	1.81 B	17.38 B	41.43 B	5.77 B	4.10 B
# of Analysts	6	4	13	7	7	4
Dividend Yield	9.12%	2.28%	2.51%	2.47%	6.22%	3.29%
<b>Value Score</b>	<b>A</b>	-	-	<b>D</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
Cash/Price	0.05	0.09	0.05	0.05	0.03	0.11
EV/EBITDA	4.74	5.89	10.90	12.05	6.46	5.10
PEG Ratio	0.65	1.13	1.54	1.66	0.73	1.08
Price/Book (P/B)	1.90	1.38	2.35	3.47	0.96	0.64
Price/Cash Flow (P/CF)	3.25	4.14	9.60	14.25	3.61	3.61
P/E (F1)	5.06	9.39	13.98	19.74	5.77	11.44
Price/Sales (P/S)	0.44	0.57	1.89	4.63	0.62	0.51
Earnings Yield	20.34%	9.06%	7.07%	5.07%	17.33%	8.74%
Debt/Equity	1.59	0.55	0.70	0.27	0.93	0.59
Cash Flow (\$/share)	14.19	3.41	7.01	13.17	11.76	8.84
<b>Growth Score</b>	<b>C</b>	-	-	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
Hist. EPS Growth (3-5 yrs)	0.72%	9.85%	10.85%	4.57%	1.77%	4.21%
Proj. EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-2.58%	-0.09%	5.99%	15.83%	3.09%	-14.34%
Curr. Cash Flow Growth	-16.46%	-5.85%	6.15%	10.98%	-9.97%	-31.71%
Hist. Cash Flow Growth (3-5 yrs)	-3.48%	6.07%	8.52%	5.70%	1.05%	3.87%
Current Ratio	1.83	1.83	1.24	2.59	1.86	2.21
Debt/Capital	61.62%	39.05%	42.57%	21.49%	48.19%	37.24%
Net Margin	9.78%	5.29%	11.64%	21.10%	8.19%	5.19%
Return on Equity	36.95%	12.26%	16.74%	16.20%	16.47%	7.08%
Sales/Assets	1.14	0.84	0.54	0.46	0.57	0.64
Proj. Sales Growth (F1/F0)	-5.60%	0.00%	3.54%	3.69%	-1.13%	0.22%
<b>Momentum Score</b>	<b>B</b>	-	-	<b>D</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>
Daily Price Chg	-14.69%	-8.62%	-10.03%	-9.66%	-10.74%	-16.89%
1 Week Price Chg	0.74%	-2.40%	-0.67%	4.60%	-6.06%	-8.48%
4 Week Price Chg	-44.82%	-32.32%	-28.22%	-26.35%	-43.48%	-52.20%
12 Week Price Chg	-51.67%	-33.31%	-25.63%	-19.45%	-46.93%	-53.96%
52 Week Price Chg	-47.31%	-37.97%	-16.72%	1.36%	-46.74%	-53.52%
20 Day Average Volume	3,061,271	135,697	3,061,271	1,455,932	1,697,849	1,021,137
(F1) EPS Est 1 week change	-4.90%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-1.85%
(F1) EPS Est 4 week change	-6.41%	-1.71%	-0.32%	-0.15%	-0.94%	-31.19%
(F1) EPS Est 12 week change	-20.36%	-7.48%	-0.65%	0.33%	-5.44%	-34.63%
(Q1) EPS Est Mthly Chg	-4.67%	-4.15%	-0.62%	-0.38%	-1.77%	-49.50%



## Zacks Style Scores

The Zacks Style Score is as a complementary indicator to the Zacks rating system, giving investors a way to focus on the highest rated stocks that best fit their own stock picking preferences.

Academic research has proven that stocks with the best Value, Growth and Momentum characteristics outperform the market. The Zacks Style Scores rate stocks on each of these individual styles and assigns a rating of A, B, C, D and F. We also produce the VGM Score (V for Value, G for Growth and M for Momentum), which combines the weighted average of the individual Style Scores into one score. This is perfectly suited for those who want their stocks to have the best scores across the board.

Value Score	<b>A</b>
Growth Score	<b>C</b>
Momentum Score	<b>B</b>
VGM Score	<b>B</b>

As an investor, you want to buy stocks with the highest probability of success. That means buying stocks with a Zacks Recommendation of Outperform, which also has a Style Score of an A or a B.

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