





## Fitch Takes Rating Actions on 80 Spanish RMBS Ratings Endorsement Policy

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### **Link to Fitch Ratings' Report:** [Fitch Takes Rating Actions on 80 Spanish RMBS](#)

Fitch Ratings-London/Madrid-17 May 2013: Fitch Ratings has downgraded 97, affirmed 194 and upgraded three tranches of 80 Spanish RMBS transactions. The agency has also maintained Rating Watch Negative on seven tranches. A full list of rating actions can be found on [www.fitchratings.com](http://www.fitchratings.com) or by clicking the link above.

The transactions affected by these rating actions were placed on Rating Watch Negative on 20 March 2013, following the publication of the revised criteria assumptions for Spanish RMBS. In the course of the review Fitch categorised the transactions into six groups according to the characteristics of their performance, asset portfolio and structures. The categorisation of these transactions is set out in the rating action report at the link above. The treatment of the ratings of the transactions in each of the groups is described further in the Key Rating Drivers section of this commentary.

#### KEY RATING DRIVERS

Group 1 - Low risk portfolios mostly with a weighted average (WA) loan origination date before 2006 (26 transactions)

The affirmation of the full capital structure of 26 Spanish RMBS transactions was primarily driven by their stable performances, as well as adequate levels of credit enhancement available to the tranches to withstand the increased stress assumptions associated with Fitch's latest criteria.

Most of the loans in the underlying portfolios have low loan-to-value ratios (LTVs) and were originated before the peak of the market. The assets in these transactions have performed well in times of economic stress and are expected to continue to be resilient in the upcoming periods. Loans in arrears by more than 90 days (excluding defaults) range between 0.3% and 3.8% of the current portfolio balances. In addition, cumulative defaults have remained limited reaching up to 2.4% of the original portfolio balance.

Despite the recent revision in Fitch's market value decline assumptions, the low weighted average current loan-to-value ratios (WACLTV) of the underlying assets in these pools, in combination with positive house price growth estimated by the agency using market indices (of which only 50% is considered in the analysis), are expected to result in limited losses on any loans for which properties are sold.

Group 2 - Adverse portfolio characteristics; strong credit enhancement (8 transactions)

All of these transactions' tranches have been affirmed despite the mortgage origination being concentrated around the peak of the market. Five transactions have higher than average LTVs and almost all have seen substantial house price depreciation based on market indices. Although the level of potential losses from the sale of underlying properties is expected to be high, the tranches in these transactions have adequate levels of credit enhancement to withstand their respective stresses. For this reason the notes' ratings in these transactions have been affirmed.

The origination vintage of these portfolios is associated with not only higher LTVs, but also other adverse characteristics such as larger proportions of second homes, loans with payment holiday features and/or non-Spanish borrowers. Consequently these transactions have higher current arrears levels and are expected to suffer more defaults.

Four of the transactions are drawing on their reserve funds to make provisions for defaulted loans. Apart from TDA 29, the draws are currently limited in amount and are not in themselves driving the notes' ratings. The reserve fund in TDA 29, presently at 7.2% of target amount, is expected to be fully utilised at the next payment date in May 2013. The analysis of the transaction incorporated this expectation and showed that the current ratings remain appropriate.

Group 3 - Solid performance; insufficient credit enhancement to withstand stresses (13 transactions)

These transactions continue to outperform most Spanish RMBS transactions with loans in arrears by three months or more ranging between 0.7% and 3.2% of the current portfolio balance and limited proportions of defaulted loans to date (up to 4.4% of the original portfolio balance).

The loans in the underlying portfolios are generally well-seasoned with WA origination vintages ranging from 1999 to 2005. The WACLTVs are typically below the average for the sector, mostly between 37.5% and 63.2%, with the exception of TDA 26 Mixto Series 2, which was a securitisation of loans with LTVs above 80% and currently reports a WACLTV of 69.2%.

Despite the solid performance of the underlying portfolios and lower WACLTVs of the underlying assets, the updated market value decline assumptions have led to an increase in expected losses for these transactions. Fitch's analysis showed that the credit enhancement levels available to particular tranches across the structures are insufficient to withstand their respective rating stresses and therefore the agency has downgraded 21 tranches of the transactions belonging to this group.

#### Group 4 - Adverse portfolio characteristics; insufficient credit enhancement to withstand stresses (24 transactions)

Most of the underlying assets in these transactions were originated close to or at the peak of the market and therefore comprise high LTV loans with additional adverse characteristics, such as broker origination, borrowers who are either self-employed or on temporary contracts and/or loans to non-Spanish borrowers. The adverse quality of the assets in these pools has meant that the levels of arrears and defaults have been towards the higher end of the sector's range (with the exception of the BBVA RMBS 1 and 2).

Arrears and defaults in BBVA RMBS 1 and 2 remain low in comparison to the rest of the Group 4 transactions, however despite the relatively solid performance, the level of excess spread generated by the two structures is not sufficient to fully cover for period defaults. In addition the recoveries on defaulted loans remain low, with average loss severities on sold assets of 50.8%.

The reserve funds of most of the transactions in this group, except three (AyT CGH Caja Circulo 1, AyT CGH Galicia I and AyT CGH Galicia II), have been at least partially drawn to provision for defaulted loans. Nine of the transactions' reserve funds are fully depleted and have principal deficiency ledgers spanning from 0.2% to 7.6% of the current note balance, in some instances reaching as far as the class B (BBVA RMBS 3).

The combination of poor performance and weak credit enhancement levels were the key rating drivers for the downgrade of 66 tranches across the structures.

#### Group 5 - Payment interruption poses a risk (six transactions)

Fitch has taken various rating actions across this group, but maintains Rating Watch Negative on seven tranches due to concerns over payment interruption in case of servicer default.

Five of the six transactions that fall into this group have utilised their reserve funds to make provisions for defaulted loans and have no alternative form of liquidity (apart from AyT Caja Granada Hipotecario) that could be used to meet issuer obligations including note payments in the event of a servicer disruption. The issuer of AyT Caja Granada Hipotecario has put in place a commingling reserve (approximately EUR280,000), which in Fitch's view is not deemed sufficient to withstand the possible default of the servicer.

Although AyT CGH Caja Granada's reserve fund has not yet been utilised, the agency believes that the transaction is still subject to payment interruption risk. Defaults to date, although limited in number, have resulted in high levels of recoveries in short time frames, raising the possibility that some form of originator support may have been involved. Any such support may not be sustainable indefinitely given the current macroeconomic environment and lender regulatory changes. In Fitch's view, the recent trend in arrears also indicates that defaults are likely to occur in upcoming payment periods, making the utilisation of the reserve fund imminent, without originator intervention. Drawings from the reserve fund would reduce the likelihood that adequate liquidity is available in case of servicer disruption.

The agency also notes that downgrades of 10 tranches of transactions in this group result from a combination of increased market value decline assumptions, in particular for Bancaja 9, AyT CGH Caja Granada, AyT Caja Granada Hipotecario I, AyT CGH Caja Vital 1, and/or recent deterioration in performance (Hipocat 7).

#### Group 6 - Counterparties

The three transactions in this group were subject to previous downgrades in January 2013 due to the failure to implement remedial actions following the downgrade of their respective account banks. Fitch has subsequently been informed that the bank account roles have now been transferred to Bank of Spain (for Hipocat 16 and 20) and BNP Paribas Securities Services, Spanish Branch (for IM Caja Laboral 2). These transactions are therefore compliant with Fitch's counterparty criteria and so their ratings are no longer capped to reflect counterparty risks.

The loans in the underlying pools have performed relatively well throughout the crisis and continue to do so despite the deteriorating market trends. Loans in arrears by more than three months (excluding defaults) range between 0.4% (Hipocat 16) and 3.6% (Hipocat 20) of the current pool, while cumulative gross defaults stand at below 0.5% for Hipocat 16 and 20 and at 2.7% of IM Caja Laboral 2's initial portfolio balance. Despite the revised assumptions, the levels of credit enhancement available to the class A notes of the three transactions are sufficient to withstand higher rating stresses and have therefore been upgraded to 'AA-sf' (Hipocat 20 and IM Caja Laboral 2) and 'A+sf' (Hipocat 16).

#### RATING SENSITIVITIES

The ratings in these transactions remain susceptible to:

##### - Asset performance

A deterioration in asset performance may result from either economic factors, in particular the increasing effect of unemployment or the implementation of more stringent criteria for recognition of delinquent and defaulted borrowers, as is the case for some of the banks that have recently been subject to state intervention. A corresponding increase in new defaults and associated pressure on excess spread levels and reserve funds could result in negative rating action particularly at the lower end of the capital structures.

##### - Payment interruption

Reserve fund draws in combination with no additional sources of liquidity would put pressure on the ability of transactions to withstand servicer disruptions. This could result in negative rating actions, particularly at the top of the structures.

##### - Decline in creditworthiness of counterparties

Further decline in creditworthiness of counterparties, in particular those performing account bank roles could put pressure on ratings across transactions that are subject to ratings caps.

- Sovereign downgrades

A decline in the creditworthiness of the sovereign would have an effect on the ratings of the notes subject to the sovereign cap.

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In addition to those mentioned in the applicable criteria, the sources of information used to assess these ratings were investor reports and pool tapes.

Applicable criteria: 'Global Structured Finance Rating Criteria', dated 6 June 2012, 'EMEA RMBS Residential Mortgage Loss Criteria', dated 7 June 2012, 'EMEA Criteria Addendum - Spain', dated 20 March 2013, 'Counterparty Criteria for Structured Finance and Covered Bonds', dated 13 May 2013 and 'Counterparty Criteria for Structured Finance and Covered Bonds: Derivative Addendum', dated 13 May 2013, are available at [www.fitchratings.com](http://www.fitchratings.com).

**Applicable Criteria and Related Research**

Global Structured Finance Rating Criteria

EMEA RMBS Master Rating Criteria

EMEA Criteria Addendum - Spain - Amended

Counterparty Criteria for Structured Finance and Covered Bonds

Counterparty Criteria for Structured Finance and Covered Bonds: Derivative Addendum

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