Rating Action: Moody's review of Spanish RMBS sector triggers rating actions on 156 transactions

Global Credit Research - 23 Nov 2012

Approximately EUR 62.5 billion of debt securities affected

Madrid, November 23, 2012 -- Moody's Investors Service has today taken rating actions on 156 Spanish residential mortgage-backed securities (RMBS) transactions further to its reassessment of the entire Spanish RMBS market. The rating agency's reassessment takes into consideration the continued collateral performance deterioration, the rating agency's updated European RMBS rating methodology and ongoing deterioration in the credit quality of the Spanish sovereign and transactions' counterparties. Moody's has commented on these three ratings drivers, which have developed over the past 12 months, in its Special Comment, "European ABS and RMBS: Structured finance ratings in Aaa-countries ratings are stable; downgrades expected in other countries" published on 14 November 2012. Link: http://www.moodys.com/research/European-ABS-and-RMBS-Structured-finance-ratings-in-Aaa-countries--PBS_SF302185.

Specifically, Moody's has today downgraded the ratings of 196 notes previously rated at the country ceiling, 61 notes previously rated below A3 (sf) and confirmed the ratings of 63 notes out of 156 Spanish RMBS transactions. Moody's downgraded the senior notes by an average of 1 to 2 notches and junior notes by an average of 1 to 4 notches. The downgrades are driven primarily by revised key collateral assumptions following Moody's reassessment of the entire Spanish RMBS sector. As part of today's rating action, Moody's has also concluded its rating review of 16 Spanish RMBS transactions placed on review on 8 June 2012, following the release of the rating agency's updated methodology for rating EMEA RMBS transactions.

Please click on this link http://www.moodys.com/viewresearchdoc.aspx?docid=PBS_SF308352 for the list of affected ratings. This list is an integral part of this press release. For a detailed rationale on each rating action, please refer to the list of affected credit ratings.

At the same time, Moody's has revised key collateral assumptions in 25 other transactions, which did not result in any rating action due to sufficient credit enhancement. The list of updated assumptions for the entire Spanish RMBS sector is available in the following link http://www.moodys.com/viewresearchdoc.aspx?docid=PBS_SF308353.

Moody's has confirmed the ratings of notes rated at the country ceiling with sufficient credit enhancement and adequately mitigated exposure to counterparties. All Spanish RMBS notes rated above Ca (sf) and not confirmed by today's rating action remain on review pending reassessment of required credit enhancement to address country risk exposure. Some tranches are also on review pending assessment of rating linkage to counterparties.

RATINGS RATIONALE

Today's rating action reflects, for most Spanish RMBS tranche, the revision of key collateral assumptions following Moody's reassessment of the entire Spanish RMBS sector. Moody's expects a contracting Spanish economy and high unemployment in 2013, as the government pursues austerity measures to cut the budget deficit. The oversupply of houses, weak demand and Spanish eviction moratorium, which came into effect in November 2012, will contribute to uncertainties relating to the timing and amount of future recoveries on repossessed properties.

The rating agency maintained the key collateral assumptions in a number of transactions but downgraded senior tranches because of insufficient credit enhancement to achieve the country ceiling.

-- REVISION OF KEY COLLATERAL ASSUMPTIONS

Moody's has revised the portfolio loss assumptions because of worse-than-expected collateral performance. Moody's has also reassessed the credit quality of the outstanding Spanish RMBS portfolios to determine the credit enhancement (MILAN CE) required under the senior tranche for it to achieve the country ceiling. For this analysis, Moody's used the updated methodology to rate EMEA RMBS transactions. See "Moody's Approach to Rating
RMBS in Europe, Middle East, and Africa” (6 June 2012) for the updated European RMBS rating methodology.

The rating agency has increased (1) lifetime expected losses (EL) in 82 RMBS transactions; and (2) the MILAN credit enhancement (CE) assumptions in 167 RMBS transactions.

- Expected loss (EL)

Since Moody's last revision of assumptions in December 2011, Spanish collateral performance has continued to deteriorate. Moody's Spanish Prime RMBS index reported 90+ day delinquencies at 2.04% in September 2012, up from 1.20% in December 2011. The cumulative defaults index increased to 2.85% in September 2012, up from 2.14% in December 2011. Annualised redemption rates remained flat over the past year, currently representing 3.84%. Cash recoveries in the Spanish RMBS market have been limited to-date because of falling Spanish house prices and low property market liquidity. See "Spanish Prime RMBS Indices" for more information on collateral performance.

The continued deterioration in 90+ day arrears and cumulative defaults in the Spanish RMBS market translated into higher projected EL assumptions for certain portfolios. Moody's negative outlook for Spanish RMBS is reflected in the updated assumptions. Moody's revised its assumptions of expected losses in 82 transactions. For the overall Spanish RMBS market Moody's is assuming an average of 1.9% future losses for seasoned transactions with relatively good asset performance. In the case of less seasoned transactions showing below average performance Moody's expects on average 6% of future losses.

- MILAN CE

Moody's has revised its MILAN CE assumptions following the publication of the updated methodology used in its RMBS collateral analysis. The key changes to the EMEA RMBS methodology include the introduction of a transaction minimum credit enhancement level and to various default and severity settings in the scoring model. The overall MILAN CE is subject to two separate floors, the Minimum Portfolio MILAN CE and the Minimum Expected Loss Multiple. The Minimum Portfolio MILAN CE for Spanish RMBS ranges between 10%-15% to A3(sf) rating, or country ceiling. The Minimum Expected Loss Multiple incorporates the updated EL assumptions.

-- INSUFFICIENCY OF CREDIT ENHANCEMENT FOR SENIOR NOTES TO ACHIEVE COUNTRY CEILING

Moody's downgraded 8 notes in 7 transactions due to insufficient credit enhancement despite maintaining the key collateral assumptions. In Moody's opinion, the affected senior securities available credit enhancement is insufficient to compensate for the EL or MILAN CE assumptions. As a result, these Spanish securities cannot achieve the maximum achievable rating of A3(sf).

-- SUFFICIENT CREDIT ENHANCEMENT TO ACHIEVE COUNTRY CEILING AND ADEQUATELY MITIGATED EXPOSURE TO COUNTERPARTIES

Moody's has confirmed the ratings of 63 notes rated at the country ceiling with sufficient credit enhancement and adequately mitigated exposure to counterparties. Out of these 63 transactions Moody's increased MILAN CE or EL in 52 transactions but the credit enhancement is sufficient to offset the revised assumptions. In addition, Moody's believes that the credit enhancement supporting these notes provides adequate cushion against country risk exposure.

-- FIRST DRIVER FOR REVIEW PLACEMENT: REASSESSMENT OF CREDIT ENHANCEMENT TO ADDRESS COUNTRY RISK EXPOSURE

Moody's maintains on review for downgrade the ratings of notes rated above Ca (sf) in order to reassess credit enhancement adequacy levels, given the higher risk of economic and financial instability. Moody's is continuing to consider the impact of the deterioration of the sovereign's financial condition and the resulting asset portfolio deterioration on tranches of structured finance transactions.

-- SECOND DRIVER FOR REVIEW PLACEMENT: ASSESSMENT OF LINKAGE TO COUNTERPARTIES

Some senior and subordinated notes also remain on review pending Moody's assessment of the rating linkage to counterparties. The rating agency will assess the degree of linkage by taking into account payment disruption risk and the high exposure to swap providers or to issuer account banks.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS MAY NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE NOTES
As the euro area crisis continues, the ratings of structured finance notes remain exposed to the uncertainties of credit conditions in the general economy. The deteriorating creditworthiness of euro area sovereigns as well as the weakening credit profile of the global banking sector could negatively affect the ratings of the notes.

On 21 August 2012, Moody's released a request for comment seeking market feedback on proposed adjustments to its modelling assumptions. These adjustments are designed to account for the impact of rapid and significant country credit deterioration on structured finance transactions. If the adjusted approach is implemented as proposed, the rating of the Spanish RMBS included those affected by today rating action may be negatively affected. See "Approach to Assessing the Impact of a Rapid Country Credit Deterioration on Structured Finance Transactions", (21 August 2012) (http://www.moodys.com/research/Approach-to-Assessing-the-Impact-of-a-Rapid-Country-Credit--PBS_SF294880) for further details regarding the implications of the proposed methodology changes on Moody's ratings.


Key modelling assumptions, such as expected loss and MILAN CE assumptions have been updated. Potential sensitivities, cash flow analysis and stress scenarios for the affected transactions have not been updated, as the rating actions have been primarily driven by (1) the update of the key assumptions; and, as a consequence, (2) Moody's decision to assess credit enhancement levels consistent with each structured finance rating category.

PRINCIPAL METHODOLOGIES

The principal methodology used in these ratings was "Moody's Approach to Rating RMBS in Europe, Middle East, and Africa", published in June 2012. Please see the Credit Policy page on www.moodys.com for a copy of this methodology.


The rating considerations described in this press release complement the principal rating methodologies applicable to Spanish RMBS transactions affected by today's rating action (see link provided above in this press release for a full list of affected credit ratings).

REGULATORY DISCLOSURES

For ratings issued on a program, series or category/class of debt, this announcement provides relevant regulatory disclosures in relation to each rating of a subsequently issued bond or note of the same series or category/class of debt or pursuant to a program for which the ratings are derived exclusively from existing ratings in accordance with Moody's rating practices. For ratings issued on a support provider, this announcement provides relevant regulatory disclosures in relation to the rating action on the support provider and in relation to each particular rating action for securities that derive their credit ratings from the support provider's credit rating. For provisional ratings, this announcement provides relevant regulatory disclosures in relation to the provisional rating assigned, and in relation to a definitive rating that may be assigned subsequent to the final issuance of the debt, in each case where the transaction structure and terms have not changed prior to the assignment of the definitive rating in a manner that would have affected the rating. For further information please see the ratings tab on the issuer/entity page for the respective issuer on www.moodys.com.

The ratings have been disclosed to the rated entities or their designated agent(s) and issued with no amendment resulting from that disclosure.

Information sources used to prepare each of the ratings are the following: parties involved in the ratings, public information, and confidential and proprietary Moody's Investors Service information.

Moody's did not receive or take into account a third party assessment on the due diligence performed regarding the underlying assets or financial instruments related to the monitoring of these transactions in the past six months.
Moody's considers the quality of information available on the rated entities, obligations or credits satisfactory for the purposes of issuing these ratings.

Moody's adopts all necessary measures so that the information it uses in assigning the ratings is of sufficient quality and from sources Moody's considers to be reliable including, when appropriate, independent third-party sources. However, Moody's is not an auditor and cannot in every instance independently verify or validate information received in the rating process.

Moody's Investors Service may have provided Ancillary or Other Permissible Service(s) to the rated entities or their related third parties within the two years preceding the credit rating action. Please see the special report "Ancillary or other permissible services provided to entities rated by MIS's EU credit rating agencies" on the ratings disclosure page on our website www.moodys.com for further information.

In addition to the information provided below please find on the ratings tab of the issuer page at www.moodys.com, for each of the ratings covered, Moody's disclosures on the lead rating analyst and the Moody's legal entity that has issued each of the ratings.

Please see the ratings disclosure page on www.moodys.com for general disclosure on potential conflicts of interests.

Please see the ratings disclosure page on www.moodys.com for information on (A) MCO’s major shareholders (above 5%) and for (B) further information regarding certain affiliations that may exist between directors of MCO and rated entities as well as (C) the names of entities that hold ratings from MIS that have also publicly reported to the SEC an ownership interest in MCO of more than 5%. A member of the board of directors of this rated entity may also be a member of the board of directors of a shareholder of Moody’s Corporation; however, Moody's has not independently verified this matter.

Please see Moody's Rating Symbols and Definitions on the Rating Process page on www.moodys.com for further information on the meaning of each rating category and the definition of default and recovery.

Please see ratings tab on the issuer/entity page on www.moodys.com for the last rating action and the rating history.

The date on which some ratings were first released goes back to a time before Moody’s ratings were fully digitized and accurate data may not be available. Consequently, Moody's provides a date that it believes is the most reliable and accurate based on the information that is available to it. Please see the ratings disclosure page on our website www.moodys.com for further information.

Please see www.moodys.com for any updates on changes to the lead rating analyst and to the Moody's legal entity that has issued the rating.

Maria Turbica Manrique  
Asst Vice President - Analyst  
Structured Finance Group  
Moody's Investors Service Espana, S.A.  
Calle Principe de Vergara, 131, 6 Planta  
Madrid 28002  
Spain  
JOURNALISTS: 44 20 7772 5456  
SUBSCRIBERS: 44 20 7772 5454

Barbara Rismondo  
Senior Vice President  
Structured Finance Group  
JOURNALISTS: 44 20 7772 5456  
SUBSCRIBERS: 44 20 7772 5454

Carole Bernard  
Vice President-Senior Analyst  
Structured Finance Group  
JOURNALISTS: 44 20 7772 5456  
SUBSCRIBERS: 44 20 7772 5454
MIS, a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Corporation ("MCO"), hereby discloses that most issuers of debt securities (including corporate and municipal bonds, debentures, notes and commercial paper) and preferred stock rated by MIS have, prior to assignment of any rating, agreed to pay to MIS for appraisal and rating services rendered by it fees ranging from $1,500 to approximately $2,500,000. MCO and MIS also maintain policies and procedures to address the independence of MIS's ratings and rating processes. Information regarding certain affiliations that may exist between directors of MCO and rated entities, and between entities who hold ratings from MIS and have also publicly reported to the SEC an ownership interest in MCO of more than 5%, is posted annually at www.moodys.com under the heading "Shareholder Relations — Corporate Governance — Director and Shareholder Affiliation Policy."

Any publication into Australia of this document is by MOODY'S affiliate, Moody's Investors Service Pty Limited ABN 61 003 399 657, which holds Australian Financial Services License no. 336969. This document is intended to be provided only to "wholesale clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001. By continuing to access this document from within Australia, you represent to MOODY'S that you are, or are accessing the document as a representative of, a "wholesale client" and that neither you nor the entity you represent will directly or indirectly disseminate this document or its contents to "retail clients" within the meaning of section 761G of the Corporations Act 2001.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, credit ratings assigned on and after October 1, 2010 by Moody's Japan K.K. ("MJKK") are MJKK's current opinions of the relative future credit risk of entities, credit commitments, or debt or debt-like securities. In such a case, "MIS" in the foregoing statements shall be deemed to be replaced with "MJKK". MJKK is a wholly-owned credit rating agency subsidiary of Moody's Group Japan G.K., which is wholly owned by Moody's Overseas Holdings Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of MCO.

This credit rating is an opinion as to the creditworthiness of a debt obligation of the issuer, not on the equity securities of the issuer or any form of security that is available to retail investors. It would be dangerous for retail investors to make any investment decision based on this credit rating. If in doubt you should contact your financial or other professional adviser.