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## Fitch Affirms German Development Banks' Joint Agency Social Bond at 'AAA'

Fitch Ratings - Frankfurt am Main - 26 Jan 2023: Fitch Ratings has affirmed Joint Agency Social Bond's EUR500 million bonds (DE000A30VPZ3) at long-term 'AAA'. The bonds were issued by a group of three German regional development banks in September 2022.

The three development banks are Hamburgische Investitions- und Foerderbank, Investitions- und Strukturbank Rheinland-Pfalz and Investitionsbank des Landes Brandenburg.

### Key Rating Drivers

The bonds' 'AAA' rating is equalised with the rating of each of the three development banks' senior unsecured debt issuance because direct, explicit, unlimited and unconditional guarantees from the federal states to the development banks cover the development banks' liabilities, including their respective shares in this Joint Agency Social Bond.

The 'AAA' senior unsecured debt ratings of the development banks are equalised with the banks' respective Issuer Default Ratings (IDRs). These IDRs are aligned with those of their owners and guarantors, the German Federal State of Hamburg and Rhineland Palatinate, and with the creditworthiness of the federal state of Brandenburg, based on their strong ability and propensity to support the banks.

The creditworthiness of the owners is underpinned by the strength of the German solidarity system, which links the states' creditworthiness to that of the Federal Republic of Germany (AAA/Stable).

Based on the direct, explicit, unlimited and unconditional guarantee from the federal states to their development banks, creditors can present claims against the banks directly to the relevant federal state based on these guarantees.

Each development bank is liable for its individual share in the issue, the proceeds of which are divided between the participating banks as follows:

Hamburgische Investitions- und Foerderbank: EUR175 million

Investitions- und Strukturbank Rheinland-Pfalz: EUR175 million

Investitionsbank des Landes Brandenburg: EUR150 million.

### Rating Sensitivities

## **Factors that could, individually or collectively, lead to negative rating action/downgrade:**

Negative rating action would be triggered by a change in the federal states' ratings or creditworthiness leading to a downgrade of the participating banks' ratings. Collectively, this would most likely be driven by a downgrade of Germany, indicating a weakening ability of the federal states to provide support to their respective development banks.

An adverse change or a divergence in development banks' support schemes (likely to be triggered by changes to the respective development banks' laws) making their credit risk profiles less correlated, would result in a review of the bonds' rating.

## **Factors that could, individually or collectively, lead to positive rating action/upgrade:**

The bonds' rating is at the highest level on Fitch's rating scale and cannot be upgraded.

## **Best/Worst Case Rating Scenario**

International scale credit ratings of Financial Institutions and Covered Bond issuers have a best-case rating upgrade scenario (defined as the 99th percentile of rating transitions, measured in a positive direction) of three notches over a three-year rating horizon; and a worst-case rating downgrade scenario (defined as the 99th percentile of rating transitions, measured in a negative direction) of four notches over three years. The complete span of best- and worst-case scenario credit ratings for all rating categories ranges from 'AAA' to 'D'. Best- and worst-case scenario credit ratings are based on historical performance. For more information about the methodology used to determine sector-specific best- and worst-case scenario credit ratings, visit <https://www.fitchratings.com/site/re/10111579>

## **Criteria Variation**

Fitch has determined that a criteria variation is applicable, because the Bank Rating Criteria do not explicitly capture bonds issued by multiple issuers, which is a characteristic of these bonds. However, Fitch believes that the transaction's specific risk to investors, of being a separate liability of each issuer according to its share in the transaction, is adequately mitigated by the credit risks of these banks being highly correlated and supported by their identical rating levels, given the uniform statutory support framework from their owners.

## **REFERENCES FOR SUBSTANTIALLY MATERIAL SOURCE CITED AS KEY DRIVER OF RATING**

The principal sources of information used in the analysis are described in the Applicable Criteria.

## **Public Ratings with Credit Linkage to other ratings**

The bonds' rating is linked to the ratings of the participating development banks, which are linked to those of Federal State of Hamburg and Rhineland Palatinate and the creditworthiness of Brandenburg.

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**Rating Actions**

ENTITY/DEBT	RATING	RECOVERY	PRIOR
Joint Agency Social Bond			
• senior unsecured <sup>LT</sup>	AAA	Affirmed	AAA

**RATINGS KEY OUTLOOK WATCH**

POSITIVE	⊕	◊
NEGATIVE	⊖	◊
EVOLVING	◊	◆
STABLE	○	

## Applicable Criteria

[Bank Rating Criteria \(pub.07 Sep 2022\) \(including rating assumption sensitivity\)](#)

## Additional Disclosures

[Solicitation Status](#)

## Endorsement Status

Joint Agency Social Bond    EU Issued, UK Endorsed

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