S&P Global
Ratings

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Research Update:

Estonia Outlook Revised To Positive From Stable On Strong Recovery; 'AA-/A-1+' Ratings

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Overview

- The pandemic had a less pronounced effect on Estonia's economy than we expected, and we project real growth at 5.5% this year and 4.8% next year.
- A strong fiscal response backed by the European Central Bank's accommodative monetary policies and limited economic fallout from the pandemic will enable a moderate overall increase in public debt at extremely low cost.
- Low levels of public debt, a solid external balance sheet, and still-contained inflation levels afford Estonia further flexibility for policy support if needed.
- We have therefore revised our outlook on Estonia to positive from stable and affirmed the 'AA-/A-1+' ratings.

Rating Action

On Aug. 20, 2021, S&P Global Ratings revised its outlook on Estonia to positive from stable. At the same time, we affirmed the 'AA-/A-1+' long- and short-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings.

Outlook

The positive outlook reflects our view that Estonia's economy will recover strongly this year and next, following a relatively shallow contraction in 2020. Fiscal support will continue to aid the economic recovery in the near term, and the strong rebound will enable swift consolidation from 2022. This will mean that government debt, net of liquid assets, will rise to only 10% of GDP over the next few years. The European Central Bank's (ECB's) accommodative monetary policy supports the government's fiscal efforts. At the same time, we expect no external pressures for Estonia, given its euro area membership, balanced current account, and low levels of net external leverage.

Upside scenario

We could raise the ratings if Estonia's economy strengthened beyond our current expectations and further boosted the country's income levels. We believe such a scenario would most likely reflect productivity gains in high-value-added services sectors over the next few years. A healthy economic recovery could also result in stronger fiscal balances and reduce general government debt.

We could also raise the ratings if external metrics exceeded our expectations, for example through continuous and strong current account surpluses. Furthermore, we could raise our ratings if Estonia's economy became more synchronized with that of the eurozone, for example through converging inflation trends.

Downside scenario

We could lower the ratings or revise the outlook to stable if Estonia's economy underperformed our expectations by significant margins. Under a scenario of much weaker growth, the economy might require larger and ongoing fiscal support measures that would weaken public finances beyond our current assumptions.

Rationale

Estonia's economic recovery has gained strong momentum over the past several months. After a relatively shallow contraction in 2020, aided by a combination of less-stringent domestic health restrictions, effective fiscal support, and resilient external demand, we currently expect real GDP to grow by well over 5% this year. Although fiscal support measures during the pandemic increased actual and expected deficits in 2020-2021, policy space remains ample. We believe general government debt, net of liquid assets, will approach only 10% of GDP over the next three years, the lowest level in the EU.

A track record of strong fiscal and economic policies and the established institutional set-up continue to underpin Estonia's creditworthiness. As a eurozone member, Estonia benefits from access to the monetary union's deep capital markets and monetary policy support from the ECB. We think close to balanced current accounts over the next several years, combined with low levels of net external leveraging, will protect Estonia from external headwinds. We also expect EU budgetary and Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) transfers will boost Estonia's average annual capital account surplus to around 2.5% of GDP per year over the next few years (potentially leading to rising infrastructure-related imports and modest widening of the current account deficit). The ratings are constrained by Estonia's moderate income levels compared with those of similarly rated peers.

Institutional and economic profile: The economic recovery in the first half of 2021 was much stronger than we anticipated, and GDP already exceeds that of pre-crisis levels

- Despite a temporary spike in infections, Estonia's economic recovery was largely unaffected in the first half of 2021.
- Absent any major resurgence of the virus, we expect real GDP to expand by 5.5% in 2021 and

4.8% in 2022, benefitting from strong external demand and fiscal support.

- A significant inflow of EU funds will underpin strong medium-term growth prospects.

The Estonian economy had a strong start to the year, despite a temporary, but significant, rise of infection rates in March and April. GDP was already above pre-crisis levels in the first two quarters and early indicators show further improvement to come. Estonia's economy has been generally resilient throughout the crisis, with generally low levels of restrictions imposed compared with other European countries and a high degree of economic adaptability, also indicated by last year's relatively shallow 2.9% contraction. We are therefore confident that further economic stress due to the pandemic will be limited, despite vaccination levels currently remaining below the EU average. We expect vaccinations to catch up in the next several weeks, which should further support economic recovery.

The less severe direct impact of the pandemic on domestic demand provides a solid foundation for a strong recovery of Estonia's economy in 2021. Currently, we expect real GDP to expand by at least 5.5% in 2021 and 4.8% in 2022, absent a major resurgence of the pandemic. Besides strong domestic demand, exports are rising thanks to the rebound of economic activity in the country's most important trading partners. Over the next several months we expect a further boost to the economy on the back of an imminent pension reform, which could free up €1.3 billion of savings, equivalent to almost 4.5% of GDP. On the downside, however, we note that the labor market has not fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels, despite the strong economic rebound. Nevertheless, we expect more meaningful decreases of the unemployment rate after the third quarter.

We believe the government will consolidate public finances and reduce its fiscal stimulus measures as the economy continues to recover. At the same time, EU funds from the new EU Multiannual Financing Framework 2021-2027 (MFF) and the RRF will support Estonia's economic development over the next few years, as well as fiscal and external balances. We currently estimate that total grants allocated to Estonia through the various programs could exceed €8 billion over the next seven to nine years, well above 25% of the country's GDP. We believe the first payments from the RRF could start this year for Estonia, although they are subject to approval by the European Commission. However, we note that under the current proposal, the majority of RRF and MFF funds will not be disbursed before 2022. Given Estonia's track record of swift and effective absorption, we believe the country will use the funds quickly once they become available.

The country's demographic profile, including a shrinking working-age population, will remain a structural constraint to long-term economic growth. Although the labor market has not fully recovered from the pandemic, we believe it will become extremely tight again, similar to before the pandemic, over the next few months. At the same time, Estonia's demographic shifts have historically been less adverse than in other Baltic or Central Eastern European states. Unlike regional peers', Estonia's population has increased by an average 0.2% annually over the past five years, supported by net (re-)immigration, particularly from Finland, Latvia, Russia, and Ukraine. In addition, the implementation of previous labor reforms has accelerated the participation rate, and we consider the labor market to be very flexible by European standards.

Excluding these possible developments, we would expect Estonia to revert to annual growth closer to 2.5% after 2022. We note that Estonia has successfully increased its presence in specific high-value-added export sectors in recent years, primarily related to services--particularly information and communication technology (ICT), financial, and business services. In fact, ICT services contributed more to GDP than the construction sector did before the pandemic, and we expect these trends to continue. That said, Estonia's export base and economic activity still encompass a substantial share of lower-value-added manufacturing and services sectors, such as transportation. Income levels therefore remain below those of peers' in the same rating

category.

We note a relatively smooth transition after this year's shift in the government coalition, which now consists of a two-party government of the Reform Party and the Center Party, compared with the previous three-party center-right coalition. The reformation of the government has not changed our view of Estonia's political and institutional systems as a credit strength. Historically, Estonia has maintained sound macroeconomic management, even though few of its governments have served a full term during the past two decades. We believe that major and sustained policy shifts are unlikely. There is still a broad political consensus on key policy items, such as generally prudent fiscal policies that strengthen Estonia's competitive business environment and Estonia's membership in the EU and NATO. However, external geopolitical risks remain, for example, due to the country's proximity to Russia and the large ethnic Russian population living in Estonia.

Flexibility and performance profile: The strong economic rebound will support fiscal consolidation as soon as next year

- The temporary fiscal deficits in 2020 and 2021 appear manageable and the net public debt burden will approach a low 10% of GDP over the next few years.
- Like other eurozone members, Estonia currently benefits from the ECB's strong and accommodative monetary policy, including increased asset-purchasing programs.
- Estonia's current account remains healthy and net external leverage low, and we expect no external pressures for the small and open economy.

After a temporary expansion of the public deficit last year in an effort to provide financial support to the economy during the pandemic, we believe deficits could already contract this year. Fiscal revenue is increasing more strongly than we anticipated, particularly value-added tax, as well as personal and corporate income taxes. At the same time, we believe the government could phase out much of the current fiscal stimulus in the next few months, which could result in deficits of about 3% of GDP this year. We note, however, that fiscal results have continuously been stronger than expected over the course of the pandemic. As such, we expect the government will consolidate public finances quickly from 2022, which could narrow deficits to below 2% of GDP as soon as 2023.

Given the moderate deficits and low levels of public debt in Estonia, financing options remain ample. The country has contracted most of its financing from pan-European public sector financial institutions and EU financial facilities, as well as having issued two international bonds. The treasury also retains the option of issuing almost €1 billion of short-term debt through Treasury bills and a contracted credit line. Despite financing the recent deficits, these financing operations have boosted liquid reserves over the past few months. These currently stand at slightly below €2 billion, about 7% of GDP, which is already a 40% reduction from their peak levels in June 2020.

Despite this sizable increase in public debt, Estonia will still report the lowest debt burden as a percent of GDP in the eurozone. Estonia's government moved into a narrow debtor position last year as net general government debt reached a modest 2.6% of GDP at end-2020. We believe net debt will rise slowly to about 10% of GDP over the next few years, which is exceptionally low in a global comparison. As such, even a slightly looser fiscal policy would not materially weaken Estonia's public balance sheet. We believe the government will disburse some liquid assets over the next few years to fund deficits and repay debt. In assessing the country's debt burden, we exclude guarantee commitments relating to the European Financial Stability Facility, treating

them instead as contingent liabilities, in line with our approach for all eurozone members.

Estonia, as a eurozone member, benefits from access to the monetary union's highly developed capital markets and the ECB's credible monetary policy, including the current extraordinary quantitative easing measures, aimed at absorbing the increase in eurozone governments' financing. But we think the ECB's monetary policy goals are usually better aligned with the economic cycles of larger eurozone members than with smaller ones like Estonia, which represents about 0.3% of eurozone GDP. Before the pandemic, Estonia's economy was not well synchronized with that of the monetary union. Much like current inflation trends, Estonia has seen much higher wage growth and inflation dynamics for several years. Parallel to the economic recovery and much in line with global trends, inflation levels have risen over the past few months. Currently, price increases are broad based and owe to increasing wage growth, recovering demand, and some supply side bottlenecks, and also include the effects of rising global energy and commodity prices. Although Estonia's inflation is currently the highest within the eurozone, we note that the overall level is much in line with pre-pandemic dynamics, and does not exceed them.

Furthermore, despite its small and open economy, we believe external risks are currently low for Estonia. The country has established a track record of strong external balances, which have aided consecutive net external deleveraging over the past few years. The current account moved into balance in 2020, but this can be attributed to a temporary spike in imports at year-end 2020 regarding an individual foreign direct investment (FDI). The underlying current account dynamics look healthy, and we expect only narrow deficits over the next few years, due to rising imports on the back of the pension reform and increased absorption of EU funds over the next few years. However, we note that Estonia has generally posted current account surpluses in the years before the pandemic thanks to significant net services exports, which have consistently offset deficits on the goods and primary income balance, the latter representing a sizable stock of FDI liabilities. High-value-added services, such as ICT and business services, constituted about 40% of the services balance before the pandemic after expanding by more than 20% over the previous three years. We believe these services will retain their vital role in Estonia's export base, which highlights Estonia's economic progress as it positions itself in higher-value-added sectors. These strong current account balances, EU fund inflows on the capital account, and net FDI should facilitate further deleveraging over the next few years.

Estonia's banking sector entered the pandemic from a strong position and continues to report high liquidity, solid profitability metrics, one of the lowest average nonperforming loan ratios, and the highest capital ratios in the EU. We believe this will enable banks to weather further adverse financial effects. Generally, Estonia's banking sector remains largely foreign owned and highly concentrated, with the three largest banks occupying more than 80% of the market. However, deposit growth has significantly outpaced private-sector credit growth over the past few years and particularly in 2020, and banks have also started to use bonds as a financing option. This has continuously reduced the importance of funding from the parent group over the past few years, which, in our view, lessens spillover risks from foreign parent companies.

Key Statistics

Table 1

Estonia -- Selected Indicators

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Economic indicators (%)										
Nominal GDP (bil. €)	21	22	24	26	28	27	29	31	33	34
Nominal GDP (bil. $)	23	24	27	31	31	31	36	38	40	42
GDP per capita (000s $)	17.5	18.5	20.4	23.1	23.7	23.3	26.7	28.6	29.9	31.1
Real GDP growth	1.8	3.2	5.5	4.4	5.0	(2.9)	5.5	4.8	2.9	2.3
Real GDP per capita growth	1.6	3.2	5.2	3.9	4.7	(3.0)	5.4	4.6	2.8	2.2
Real investment growth	(3.2)	5.1	7.8	3.9	11.1	18.4	5.0	(2)	4.0	2.3
Investment/GDP	24.8	24.9	25.9	27.6	27.1	28.8	29.3	27.1	27.4	27.4
Savings/GDP	26.6	26.1	28.2	28.5	29.1	28.3	27.9	25.9	26.5	26.6
Exports/GDP	76.9	76.4	75.6	74.1	72.9	69.8	70.1	69.7	70.8	71.3
Real exports growth	(1.5)	4.8	4.1	4.0	6.2	(5.4)	7.0	4.8	4.3	3.0
Unemployment rate	6.2	6.8	5.8	5.4	4.4	6.8	6.5	5.8	5.3	5.0
External indicators (%)										
Current account balance/GDP	1.8	1.2	2.3	0.9	2.0	(0.6)	(1.4)	(1.2)	(0.8)	(0.8)
Current account balance/CARs	2.1	1.5	2.7	1.1	2.4	(0.8)	(1.7)	(1.6)	(1.0)	(1.0)
CARs/GDP	84.1	84.0	83.5	82.1	80.4	77.8	79.4	79.0	80.2	80.8
Trade balance/GDP	(4.2)	(3.7)	(3.8)	(4.7)	(3.2)	(0.4)	(0.7)	(0.5)	(0.3)	(0.3)
Net FDI/GDP	(0.6)	2.4	3.9	4.7	3.5	9.4	5.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Net portfolio equity inflow/GDP	(1.2)	(1.3)	0	(0.6)	(1.5)	(4.1)	(3.0)	(1.0)	(1.0)	(1.0)
Gross external financing needs/CARs plus usable reserves	164.1	157.6	149.0	149.6	140.6	142.1	142.2	140.0	137.2	136.0
Narrow net external debt/CARs	29.5	27.2	27.0	19.5	16.2	14.5	13.2	13.2	13.4	13.6
Narrow net external debt/CAPs	30.1	27.6	27.8	19.7	16.6	14.4	13.0	13.0	13.3	13.5
Net external liabilities/CARs	46.6	44.4	42.1	35.1	26.7	28.7	26.2	26.0	24.9	24.0
Net external liabilities/CAPs	47.6	45.0	43.3	35.5	27.3	28.5	25.8	25.6	24.7	23.7
Short-term external debt by remaining maturity/CARs	69.9	62.3	54.1	52.7	47.2	49.8	50.6	50.2	48.7	47.6
Usable reserves/CAPs (months)	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.1
Usable reserves (mil. $)	415	352	345	755	1,426	1,997	2,530	2,912	3,111	3,319
Fiscal indicators (general government; %)										
Balance/GDP	0.1	(0.4)	(0.7)	(0.6)	0.1	(4.9)	(2.9)	(2.3)	(1.5)	(1.2)
Change in net debt/GDP	1.9	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.4)	(0.4)	6.1	3.3	2.2	1.5	1.3
Primary balance/GDP	0.2	(0.4)	(0.7)	(0.5)	0.1	(4.9)	(2.8)	(2.2)	(1.4)	(1.2)

Table 1

Estonia -- Selected Indicators (cont.)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Revenue/GDP	39.4	38.7	38.5	38.7	39.0	40.2	41.0	40.0	39.0	39.0
Expenditures/GDP	39.2	39.1	39.2	39.3	38.9	45.1	43.9	42.3	40.5	40.3
Interest/revenues	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Debt/GDP	7.7	7.7	6.9	6.1	6.5	16.3	15.6	16.0	16.8	17.4
Debt/revenues	19.6	19.8	17.8	15.8	16.7	40.5	38.0	40.0	43.0	44.5
Net debt/GDP	(3.3)	(3.2)	(3.0)	(3.2)	(3.4)	2.6	5.7	7.6	8.7	9.6
Liquid assets/GDP	11.0	10.9	9.9	9.4	9.9	13.7	9.9	8.4	8.0	7.7
Monetary indicators (%)										
CPI growth	0.1	0.8	3.7	3.4	2.3	(0.6)	2.5	2.3	1.9	1.9
GDP deflator growth	1.1	2.3	3.1	4.2	3.2	(0.4)	2.5	2.3	1.8	1.7
Exchange rate, year-end (€/$)	0.92	0.95	0.83	0.87	0.89	0.81	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83
Banks' claims on resident non-gov't sector growth	5.2	6.7	0.7	5.2	4.3	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.5
Banks' claims on resident non-gov't sector/GDP	68.9	69.7	64.5	62.4	60.1	64.7	62.2	60.6	60.5	60.7
Foreign currency share of claims by banks on residents	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Foreign currency share of residents' bank deposits	7.4	6.7	6.1	5.8	4.9	4.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Real effective exchange rate growth	2.5	(1.2)	7.5	4.8	2.3	(0.5)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Sources: Eurostat and Statistics Estonia (economic indicators); Bank of Estonia, Eurostat, and IMF (Monetary indicators); Eurostat (fiscal and debt indicators); Bank of Estonia (external indicators).

Adjustments: Debt to GDP excludes European Financial Stability Facility -related guarantees.

Definitions: Savings is defined as investment plus the current account surplus (deficit). Investment is defined as expenditure on capital goods, including plant, equipment, and housing, plus the change in inventories. Banks are other depository corporations other than the central bank, whose liabilities are included in the national definition of broad money. Gross external financing needs are defined as current account payments plus short-term external debt at the end of the prior year plus nonresident deposits at the end of the prior year plus long-term external debt maturing within the year. Narrow net external debt is defined as the stock of foreign and local currency public- and private-sector borrowings from nonresidents minus official reserves minus public-sector liquid claims on nonresidents minus financial-sector loans to, deposits with, or investments in nonresident entities. A negative number indicates net external lending. N/A--Not applicable. CARs--Current account receipts. FDI--Foreign direct investment. CAPs--Current account payments. N/A--Not applicable. The data and ratios above result from S&P Global Ratings' own calculations, drawing on national as well as international sources, reflecting S&P Global Ratings' independent view on the timeliness, coverage, accuracy, credibility, and usability of available information.

Ratings Score Snapshot

Table 2

Estonia -- Ratings Score Snapshot

Key rating factors	Score	Explanation
Institutional assessment	2	Generally strong track record of policies that deliver sustainable public finances. Unbiased enforcement of contracts and respect for rule of law. Broadly effective checks and balances between institutions. Free flow of information throughout society, with open debate of policy decisions. Timely and reliable data and statistical information. We also factor in coordination requirements at the eurozone level that may hinder timely policy response.
Economic assessment	3	Based on GDP per capita ($) as per the Selected Indicators table.
External assessment	2	Based on narrow net external debt as per the Selected Indicators table. In the context of our external assessment, we consider Estonia, a member of the Economic and Monetary Union, as if the currency was actively traded.
Fiscal assessment: flexibility and performance	2	Based on the change and trend in net general government debt (% of GDP) as per Selected Indicators in Table 1.
Fiscal assessment: debt burden	1	Based on net general government debt (% of GDP) and general government interest expenditure (% of general government revenue) as per the Selected Indicators in Table 1.
Monetary assessment	3	In the context of our monetary assessment, we consider the euro to be a reserve currency. The European Central Bank has an established track record in monetary authority independence with clear objectives and a wide array of policy instruments, including nonconventional tools. The consumer price index is low and largely in line with that of its trading partners. Estonia is a member of Economic and Monetary Union. Estonia's GDP per capita remains below the EU average and the country's economic base is narrow. Wage and inflation dynamics are well above eurozone average figures.
Indicative rating	aa	As per Table 1 of "Sovereign Rating Methodology."
Notches of supplemental adjustments and flexibility	-1	Estonia's GDP figures remain significantly below peers at the 'AA' level and are more in line with its Baltic peers' (Latvia and Lithuania), which we rate in our 'A' category.
Sovereign credit rating		
Foreign currency	AA-	
Notches of uplift	0	Default risks do not apply differently to foreign- and local-currency debt.
Local currency	AA-	

S&P Global Ratings' analysis of sovereign creditworthiness rests on its assessment and scoring of five key rating factors: (i) institutional assessment; (ii) economic assessment; (iii) external assessment; (iv) the average of fiscal flexibility and performance, and debt burden; and (v) monetary assessment. Each of the factors is assessed on a continuum spanning from 1 (strongest) to 6 (weakest). S&P Global Ratings' "Sovereign Rating Methodology," published on Dec. 18, 2017, details how we derive and combine the scores and then derive the sovereign foreign currency rating. In accordance with S&P Global Ratings' sovereign ratings methodology, a change in score does not in all cases lead to a change in the rating, nor is a change in the rating necessarily predicated on changes in one or more of the scores. In determining the final rating the committee can make use of the flexibility afforded by §15 and §§126-128 of the rating methodology.

Related Criteria

- Criteria | Governments | Sovereigns: Sovereign Rating Methodology, Dec. 18, 2017
- General Criteria: Methodology For Linking Long-Term And Short-Term Ratings, April 7, 2017
- General Criteria: Principles Of Credit Ratings, Feb. 16, 2011
- General Criteria: Methodology: Criteria For Determining Transfer And Convertibility

Assessments, May 18, 2009

Related Research

- Sovereign Ratings Score Snapshot, Aug. 3, 2021
- Sovereign Ratings List, July 26, 2021
- Sovereign Ratings History, July 26, 2021
- Sovereign Risk Indicators, July 12, 2021; a free interactive version is available at http://www.spratings.com/sri
- The ECB's New Strategy Signals Smooth Tapering And Cautious Greening Ahead, July 9, 2021
- European Developed Sovereign Rating Trends Midyear 2021, June 29, 2021
- Economic Outlook Europe Q3 2021: The Grand Reopening, June 24, 2021
- Next Generation EU Will Shift European Growth Into A Higher Gear, April 27, 2021
- 2020 Annual Sovereign Default And Rating Transition Study, April 12, 2021
- Sovereign Debt 2021: Global Borrowing Will Stay High To Spur Economic Recovery, March 1, 2021
- Sovereign Debt 2021: Developed EMEA's Commercial Borrowing Could Reach $1.4 Trillion, March 1, 2021

In accordance with our relevant policies and procedures, the Rating Committee was composed of analysts that are qualified to vote in the committee, with sufficient experience to convey the appropriate level of knowledge and understanding of the methodology applicable (see 'Related Criteria And Research'). At the onset of the committee, the chair confirmed that the information provided to the Rating Committee by the primary analyst had been distributed in a timely manner and was sufficient for Committee members to make an informed decision.

After the primary analyst gave opening remarks and explained the recommendation, the Committee discussed key rating factors and critical issues in accordance with the relevant criteria. Qualitative and quantitative risk factors were considered and discussed, looking at track-record and forecasts.

The committee's assessment of the key rating factors is reflected in the Ratings Score Snapshot above.

The chair ensured every voting member was given the opportunity to articulate his/her opinion. The chair or designee reviewed the draft report to ensure consistency with the Committee decision. The views and the decision of the rating committee are summarized in the above rationale and outlook. The weighting of all rating factors is described in the methodology used in this rating action (see 'Related Criteria And Research').

Ratings List

Outlook Action; Ratings Affirmed

	To	From
Estonia		
Sovereign Credit Rating	AA-/Positive/A-1+	AA-/Stable/A-1+
Transfer & Convertibility Assessment	AAA	AAA
Senior Unsecured	AA-	AA-
Short-Term Debt	A-1+	A-1+

Certain terms used in this report, particularly certain adjectives used to express our view on rating relevant factors, have specific meanings ascribed to them in our criteria, and should therefore be read in conjunction with such criteria. Please see Ratings Criteria at www.standardandpoors.com for further information. A description of each of S&P Global Ratings' rating categories is contained in "S&P Global Ratings Definitions" at https://www.standardandpoors.com/en_US/web/guest/article/-/view/sourceId/504352 Complete ratings information is available to subscribers of RatingsDirect at www.capitaliq.com. All ratings affected by this rating action can be found on S&P Global Ratings' public website at www.standardandpoors.com. Use the Ratings search box located in the left column. Alternatively, call one of the following S&P Global Ratings numbers: Client Support Europe (44) 20-7176-7176; London Press Office (44) 20-7176-3605; Paris (33) 1-4420-6708; Frankfurt (49) 69-33-999-225; Stockholm (46) 8-440-5914; or Moscow 7 (495) 783-4009.

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