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General Criteria:

Country Risk Assessment Methodology And Assumptions

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*(**Editor's Note:** We originally published this criteria article on November 19, 2013. We're republishing this article following our periodic review completed on November 4, 2014.)*

1. Standard & Poor's Ratings Services is publishing its methodology for determining a country risk assessment, which forms a benchmark for incorporating country risk in corporate ratings and in ratings on other sectors that include such assessments in related criteria. This follows our "Request For Comment: Methodology And Assumptions Of Country Risk For Non-Sovereign Ratings," published July 31, 2013, on RatingsDirect.

2. We define "country risk" as the broad range of economic, institutional, financial market, and legal risks that arise from doing business with or in a specific country and can affect a non-sovereign entity's credit quality. The credit risk for every rated entity and transaction is influenced to varying degrees by these types of country-specific risks.

3. Under the criteria, we rank country risk on a scale of '1' (very low risk) to '6' (very high risk) to establish a "country risk assessment." The country risk assessment is one aspect of the sector-specific criteria we use to determine ratings of entities within scope of these criteria. We publish these country risk assessments and update them on a regular basis (see "Standard & Poor's Publishes Finalized Country Risk Assessments For 103 Countries," Nov. 19, 2013). The country risk assessment criteria are similar to those we use to assess country risk in the insurance sector (see the section "Insurance Industry and Country Risk Assessment" in "Insurers: Rating Methodology," published on May 7, 2013).

4. These criteria govern our determination of the country risk assessment, which reflects this broad set of risks. The use of a country risk assessment enhances consistency and transparency in how we incorporate country risk analytics in our non-sovereign ratings and will be guided by sector-specific criteria, such as that described in "Corporate Methodology," Nov. 19, 2013. The criteria do not affect our approach to considering country risk for banks, which is described in "Banking Industry Country Risk Assessment Methodology And Assumptions," Nov. 9, 2011.

5. Several other methodology articles explain our current approach to incorporating country risk in our ratings and are listed in "Related Criteria And Research," below. Subsequent updates of our methodologies may incorporate specific references to the country risk assessment or relevant components of the assessment.

6. These criteria complement our criteria for assigning ratings above the sovereign, such as "Ratings Above The Sovereign--Corporate And Government Ratings: Methodology And Assumptions," Nov. 19, 2013, and as proposed in "Request For Comment: Methodology And Assumptions For Ratings Above The Sovereign--Single Jurisdiction Structured Finance," Oct. 14, 2013. However, country risk addresses risk factors that help determine all non-sovereign ratings and include broader factors than sovereign default risk. Criteria for ratings above the sovereign relate only to entities potentially rated above the sovereign and consider the effect of sovereign default risk along with various types of sovereign direct intervention, such as transfer and convertibility risk. (For the latter risk, see also: "Criteria For

Determining Transfer And Convertibility Assessments," May 18, 2009.)

7. The criteria constitute specific methodologies and assumptions under "Principles of Credit Ratings," Feb. 16, 2011.

SCOPE OF THE CRITERIA

8. The criteria describe the methodology we use to arrive at our country risk assessments. The ultimate use of the country risk assessments will be governed by sector- and asset-class-specific criteria.

9. These criteria do not change our methodologies for sovereign ratings, local and regional government ratings, bank ratings, and insurance ratings. There would not be immediate changes in our methodology for structured finance transactions; however, we expect the country risk assessments to inform future criteria calibration decisions.

SUMMARY OF THE CRITERIA

10. Country risk, for the purposes of these criteria, is the risk an entity faces by having some of its operations or assets exposed to one or more countries. The country-specific risks covered by these criteria consist of economic risk, institutional and governance effectiveness risk, financial system risk, and payment culture/rule-of-law risk.

11. Standard & Poor's sovereign ratings have often been used by the market as a proxy for indicating the extent of these risks in a given country. However, the sovereign rating's focus is on the likelihood that a sovereign obligor will pay its debt on time and in full. The sovereign rating itself may understate, or overstate, the country-specific risks that are relevant to non-sovereign credit analysis. Therefore, Standard & Poor's separately analyzes the relevant country risks for non-sovereign entities.

12. We currently incorporate relevant country risk factors in our analyses of all sectors and asset classes. The country risk assessment draws from related criteria that form parts of our sovereign rating analysis and banking industry country risk assessment (BICRA) analysis and is also informed by externally provided country risk indicators to arrive at the overall country risk assessment.

13. For the overall country risk assessment, we first assign a ranking from '1' to '6' (strongest to weakest) to each of the following four sub-factors, as described in Section B, "Country Risk Assessment: Four Sub-Factors":

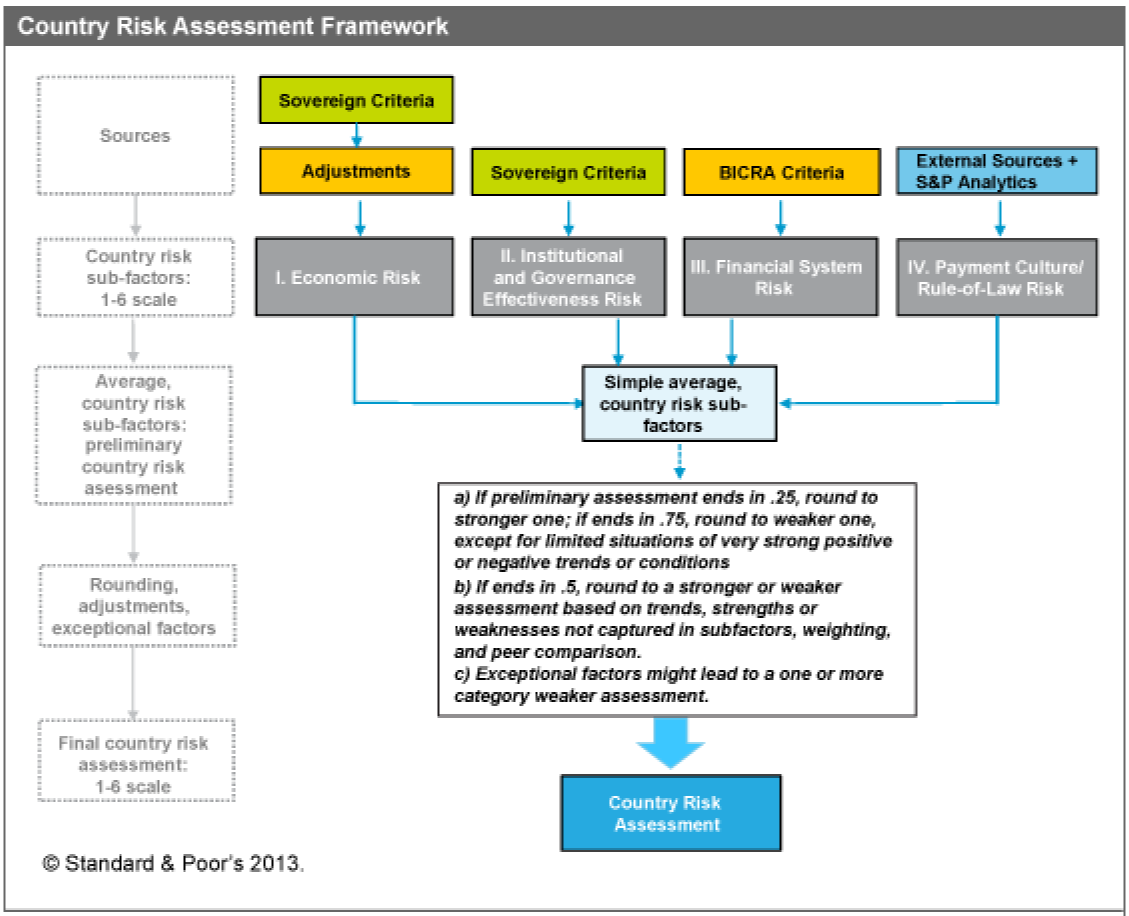
- Economic risk,
- Institutional and governance effectiveness risk (includes risks known as "political risk"),
- Financial system risk, and
- Payment culture and rule-of-law risk.

14. We then determine the simple average of the four sub-factors and round up or down, with additional potential adjustment, as described in Section C, "Final Country Risk Assessment: Combining Four Sub-Factors And Adjustments," paragraphs 47-52.

15. The overall country risk assessment would be ranked as follows:

- '1', very low risk,
- '2', low risk,
- '3', intermediate risk,
- '4', moderately high risk,
- '5', high risk, or
- '6', very high risk.

16. The relevant sector-level criteria will indicate the specific methodology for incorporating the country risk assessment in the credit rating analysis and will specify how the country risk assessment will be incorporated for a multi-jurisdictional entity or transaction, typically using a weighted-average approach to calculate aggregate country risk exposure.



CHANGES FROM REQUEST FOR COMMENT

17. See the section on Country Risk Criteria in "Standard & Poor's Summarizes Request For Comment Process For New Corporate Methodology," published Nov. 19, 2013.

IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING RATINGS

18. We do not expect these criteria, in and of itself, to result in changes to ratings.

EFFECTIVE DATE AND TRANSITION

19. These criteria are effective immediately.

METHODOLOGY

A. Criteria Calibration

20. Of the many factors that contribute to country risk, we have chosen to focus on four sub-factors, which we believe are the key determinants for country risk. This followed our review of coincident and causal factors related to increased country-related default risk for non-sovereign entities, as explained below.

21. ***Sub-factor 1, Economic Risk:*** Several sources document a correlation between increased macroeconomic volatility and elevated country risk. For example, we note in "Understanding Standard & Poor’s Rating Definitions" (June 3, 2009), Appendix IV, "…developing economies…may experience pronounced swings in GDP and unemployment at fairly frequent intervals." This observation is also noted in the National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper, "Emerging Market Business Cycles: The Cycle Is the Trend": "Emerging market economies on average have a business cycle two times as volatile as their developed counterparts." (Mark Aguiar and Gita Gopinath, Journal of Political Economy, 2007, vol. 115, no. 1, ©2007 by The University of Chicago.) On the other hand, the default studies cited below indicate the Great Recession of 2009 had a greater default effect in developed markets and serve as a reminder that macroeconomic volatility is not limited to emerging markets. Similarly, in a recent IMF Working Paper titled "The International Monetary System: Where Are We and Where Do We Need to Go?", the authors note that real GDP growth volatility for advanced economies jumped substantially during the "North Atlantic financial crisis of 2008-09" compared with the "Great Moderation" period of 1984-2007. They note that "large and volatile capital flows have promoted greater volatility in financial markets, leading to recurrent financial crises" (Rakesh Mohan, Michael Debabrata Patra, Muneesh Kapur, November 2013).

22. At the same time, we have observed a high correlation between corporate default rates and sovereign crises and macroeconomic volatility, as our emerging-market default study confirms (see "2012 Emerging Markets Corporate Default Study And Rating Transitions: The Region’s Default Rate Exceeds The Global Rate For The Fourth Time In History," published March 27, 2013). According to this study, global emerging-market speculative-grade default rates peaked in 2002 at 16% after Argentina's sovereign default and amid heightened macroeconomic volatility in Brazil. This default rate is significantly higher than the record global speculative-grade corporate default rate of 11% in 1991 (10.69% for the U.S.). The other significant peak in emerging-market speculative-grade default rates was 8% in 1998, related to the Russian and Asian macroeconomic crises.

23. ***Sub-factor 2, Institutional and Governance Effectiveness Risk:*** We also noted, in "2011 Inaugural Emerging Markets Corporate Default Study And Rating Transitions" (April 30, 2012), that periods of stress in emerging markets were characterized by political instability, high external debt, unsustainable financial policies, heavy dependence on exports,

and unstable financial markets. In our sovereign analysis of Institutional and Governance Effectiveness Risk, the main focus is on factors that ultimately relate to the stability and predictability of the environment for non-sovereigns: "Effectiveness, stability, and predictability of the sovereign's policymaking and political institutions" as well as political event risk, such as domestic and external security risks, which can cause a more severe impact for the business environment.

24. ***Sub-factor 3, Financial System Risk:*** For developed markets, our global default studies also demonstrate significant correlation of defaults with weak points in business cycles and banking crises. The 1991 peak default rate referred to above occurred after a moderate recession in the U.S., a severe but short recession in the U.K., and the Nordic banking crisis. Other developed-market speculative-grade default peaks were:

- U.S.--10.6% in 2001 (the U.S. recession), and 11.4% in 2009 (the global banking crisis and recession);
- Europe--12.3% in 2002, due in part to the bursting of the technology/Internet bubble and failures of a large number of telecom start-ups.

25. (Sources: "2012 Annual Global Corporate Default Study," March 18, 2013, and "Understanding Standard & Poor's Rating Definitions," June 3, 2009.)

26. "This Time Is Different" (Reinhart, Carmen M. and Rogoff, Kenneth S., 2009) also points to the link between corporate defaults and banking crises (see figure 16.1, page 252). The authors indicate that although countries may "graduate" from certain types of crises, such as serial defaults on sovereign debt or hyperinflation episodes, developed and emerging economies alike remain subject to banking and financial crises.

27. ***Sub-factor 4, Payment culture/Rule of Law:*** This factor is also considered in our BICRA criteria (paragraph 68: Economic Risk/Credit Risk in the Economy/Adjustment for payment culture and rule of law). Compared with our BICRA criteria, we have given this factor increased weight, elevating it to one of the four sub-factors. This is because of the key importance of concepts such as respect for rule of law, property rights, contract rights and enforceability, corruption, and related event risk, including the extreme cases of expropriation and nationalization in the country risk considerations. Of the many external indicators available for this factor, we have focused on four indicators, including those cited in our BICRA criteria, which are World Bank Governance indicators for Rule of Law and Control of Corruption and Transparency International's 'Corruptions Perception Index'. We also consider the World Bank 'Doing Business In' indicator for Enforcing Contracts. In this way, we avoid relying on any single external indicator or source. We also complement these external indicators with Standard & Poor's analytics, including insolvency regime research.

28. ***Weighting of the four sub-factors:*** After extensive review and testing, we have concluded that an equal weighting of the four sub-factors is the most representative approach to country risk. While the risk profiles in some countries might temporarily suggest a different weighting (such as when domestic hostilities break out or a banking crisis is under way), we did not find any one risk more determinant than others over time for the majority of countries. Still, to recognize the importance and potential for periodic sharp hikes in one type of risk, we introduced judgmental weighting on a case-by-case basis (per paragraph 49, we may round a country risk assessment weaker in case of "One type of risk being or becoming dominant that would cause us to add additional weight to an unfavorable sub-factor and reduce weight to a more favorable sub-factor(s)").

B. Country Risk Assessment: Four Sub-Factors

29. The country risk assessment considers four sub-factors:

- Economic risk,

- Institutional and governance effectiveness risk,
- Financial system risk, and
- Payment culture and rule-of-law risk.

30. Each sub-factor is ranked according to the following scale:

- '1', very low risk;
- '2', low risk;
- '3', intermediate risk;
- '4', moderately high risk;
- '5', high risk; and
- '6', very high risk.

31. These sub-factors are based on a series of quantitative factors and qualitative considerations.

Economic risk

32. The economic risk sub-factor draws on the criteria for the sovereign economic score, with adjustments, as described below, for elevated monetary risk, external risk, or economic imbalances. The sovereign economic score includes income levels, which set the initial score; and adjustment factors, including growth prospects, economic diversity, and volatility, which lead to the overall score. (For more details, see "Sovereign Government Rating Methodology And Assumptions," June 24, 2013, Section 2, "Economic Score," paragraphs 41-52.)

33. After considering the criteria for the overall sovereign economic score, we would consider the criteria for other sovereign rating scores (monetary and external) and for a BICRA sub-score (economic imbalances within the economic risk assessment) to derive the economic risk sub-factor, and adjust this score as follows:

- Add '1' if the initial economic risk sub-factor ranking is '4' or stronger, and if: the sovereign monetary score, or sovereign external score, or BICRA economic imbalances score is '5' or '6'; or
- Add '1' if the initial economic risk sub-factor score is '5', and if: the sovereign monetary score, or sovereign external score, or BICRA economic imbalances score, is '6.'

34. Economic risk is relevant for non-sovereigns because of the following factors:

- Relative income levels and changes in income levels influence consumer spending power and, therefore, consumer loan default frequency and corporate revenues;
- Economic diversity and volatility influence the relative duration and severity of business cycles; and
- Growth prospects influence business investment decisions and consumer spending expansion or contraction.

35. The reason for the additional adjustment for weakness in monetary or external trends is to better capture potential incremental economic volatility relevant to the private sector. For example, in our criteria for the sovereign monetary score, an initial monetary score of '5' may indicate one or more of the following risk factors, which are relevant for non-sovereigns: a currency regime that features a "hard peg" (currency board) and therefore may be subject to currency devaluation risk if the hard peg does not hold; a central bank that has limited ability to act as a lender of last resort for the financial system; or relatively high inflation (the consumer price index exceeds 10%). High inflation can affect pricing power, corporate cost structures, and consumers' discretionary spending power. In our criteria for the sovereign external score, an initial external score of '5' would indicate relatively high external debt and relatively weak

external liquidity, a combination that could increase the risk of economic volatility affecting non-sovereigns.

Institutional and governance effectiveness risk

36. This sub-factor, which includes a number of risks more generally known as "political risk," draws on the criteria for the sovereign institutional and governance effectiveness score. This sovereign score covers the following factors:

- Effectiveness, stability, and predictability of the sovereign's policymaking and political institutions (the primary factor);
- Transparency and accountability of institutions (the secondary factor); and
- Potential adjustment factors, such as sovereign debt payment culture and external security risks.

37. (For more details, see "Sovereign Government Rating Methodology And Assumptions," June 24, 2013, Section 1, "Institutional and Governance Effectiveness Score," paragraphs 28-40.)

38. Political risk as analyzed under our sovereign methodology is relevant for non-sovereigns because policymaking instability and weaker political institutions reduce predictability for the private sector, and because high geopolitical or internal security risk indicate potential conflict that can be disruptive to the private sector.

Financial system risk

39. The relative strength, or weakness, of a country's banking system and the relative depth of its capital markets are important country risk factors for non-sovereigns. The BICRA industry risk score is the principal factor we use to assess this sub-factor. We also make adjustments as described below for particularly broad, or narrow, access to domestic or external capital markets.

40. The initial financial system risk sub-factor draws on the criteria for the BICRA industry risk score. We note that the overall BICRA score has two components: economic risk and industry risk. However, because most of the factors considered in the BICRA economic risk are already included in the country risk economic risk sub-factor, the emphasis in this section is on the BICRA industry risk score.

41. The adjustments to the initial financial system risk sub-factor score reflect whether domestic capital markets are narrow or deep and draw on the criteria in the BICRA for "Adjustment For Domestic Debt Capital Markets," in "Systemwide Funding," which is part of the BICRA industry risk score. The BICRA criteria take into consideration private-sector (financial and corporate sector) debt outstanding as a percentage of GDP, the existence of an active capital market for debt issuance, and the tenor of long-term debt issuance. The adjustments to the initial financial system sub-factor score also reflect whether non-sovereigns have limited access to external markets.

- Add '1' if the domestic capital markets are narrow or there is a significant lack of access to external capital markets; or
- Subtract '1' if domestic capital markets are deep. To receive this positive adjustment, the private sector should also have reasonable access to external capital markets.

42. These adjustments intentionally emphasize the effect of narrow or broad access to capital markets for non-sovereigns. Deep and well-functioning domestic capital markets combined with access to external capital markets can offset, to some extent, relatively weaker domestic banking systems, while narrow access to capital markets can offset strengths or exacerbate the weakness of domestic banking systems.

43. Financial system risk is relevant to non-sovereigns because it measures access to credit, both domestic and external, from both the banking system and capital markets, and the relative volatility of that access to credit.

Payment culture/Rule-of-law risk

44. The payment culture/rule-of-law sub-factor draws on external indicators such as the World Bank's governance indicators for the rule of law and control of corruption, the World Bank's "Doing Business In" ranking for enforcing contracts, and Transparency International's 'Corruption Perception Index'. These same indicators, for example, inform our assessment of rule of law/payment culture risk in the BICRA economic risk analysis. This risk category also covers other information, including Standard & Poor's insolvency regime classification (where available), which is a relative indicator of creditor friendliness and referred to in our corporate recovery rating criteria; Standard & Poor's country-specific analysis of legal considerations; and other external sources, including the World Bank "Doing Business In" ranking for resolving insolvency.

45. We might adjust the sub-factor score downward if we believe expropriation risk is high or very high. This would apply if the government has a recent track record of nationalizing (compensating the owner) or expropriating (without promptly compensating the owner) domestic entities. (Further information on Standard & Poor's insolvency regime classification can be found in "Update: Jurisdiction-Specific Adjustments To Recovery And Issue Ratings," June 20, 2008, and in individual insolvency regime reports in "Debt Recovery For Creditors And The Law Of Insolvency In [various countries]," published starting in 2006 and updated periodically.)

46. This category is relevant to non-sovereigns because it affects the reliability of contracts and enforcement of contractual rights. The analysis considers creditors' rights, the predictability of the legal framework, and the relative level of corruption.

C. Final Country Risk Assessment: Combining Four Sub-Factors And Adjustments

47. We combine the sub-factors as a simple average of the four factors to arrive at the preliminary country risk assessment. In the absence of exceptional adjustment factors, the final country risk assessment is equal to the preliminary country risk assessment, rounded (when relevant) to a whole number, as indicated below:

- The preliminary country risk assessment ending in .25 is rounded to a stronger assessment (except for limited situations in which there are very strong negative trends or conditions, described in paragraph 51);
- The preliminary country risk assessment ending in .75 is rounded to a weaker assessment (except for limited situations in which there are very strong positive trends or conditions, described in paragraph 51);
- The preliminary country risk assessment ending in .5 is rounded to either a stronger or weaker assessment based on directional trends, our view of the relative weighting of the sub-factors, and other considerations described in paragraphs 48-50.

48. We would expect to round an assessment ending in .5 to a stronger assessment (for example, from '4.5' to '4') when, on balance, we observed or expected the following factors to be positive:

- A positive directional trend, which might be identified by: a positive sovereign rating outlook when the rationale for such positive outlook points to specific, potential near-term improvement in the factors relevant to the country risk assessment; a positive BICRA trend or new capital market reforms that point to a positive trend in the financial environment; increased stability and visibility in the business environment; or other positive developments for the business environment that lead us to weigh certain country risk sub-factors higher or lower than others;

- A strength in the business or financial environment that is not directly reflected in the country risk sub-factors, for example, where the overall BICRA is relatively stronger than the BICRA industry risk, and where the strength of the overall BICRA reflects factors not already captured by the country risk economic risk sub-factor. The financial system risk sub-factor, as described in Section B, considers the criteria for the BICRA industry risk score but not the overall BICRA and therefore does not consider the BICRA economic risk score. Although much of the BICRA economic risk score is already reflected in the country risk economic sub-factor, the BICRA economic risk score contains some additional metrics. Here, we introduce the overall BICRA as a potential factor in determining the rounding adjustment for the country risk assessment; or
- Evident strength in country risk factors relative to those of weaker peers, defined as countries with a country risk assessment in the weaker of the two rounding choices. For example, if we are considering moving from '4.5' to '4', we would consider the strengths of the country risk factors relative to those of countries with a country risk assessment of '5'.

49. Conversely, we would expect to round an assessment ending in .5 to a weaker assessment (for example, from '4.5' to '5') when, on balance, we observed or expected the following factors to be negative:

- A negative directional trend, which might be identified by: a negative sovereign rating outlook, when the rationale for such negative outlook points to specific, potential near-term deterioration in the sub-factors relevant to the country risk assessment; a negative BICRA trend that points to a negative trend in the financial environment; reduced stability and visibility in the business environment; or other negative developments for the business environment that would lead us to weigh certain country risk sub-factors higher or lower than others;
- A weakness in the business or financial environment that is not directly reflected in the country risk sub-factors. For example, where the overall BICRA is relatively weaker than the BICRA industry risk, the latter of which would be considered in the financial system risk sub-factor. This would take into consideration the overall BICRA, as opposed to the BICRA industry risk score, which is already considered in the financial system risk sub-factor (see paragraph 48 for more explanation on the BICRA economic risk versus the country risk economic risk sub-factor);
- One type of risk being or becoming dominant that would cause us to add additional weight to an unfavorable sub-factor and reduce weight to a more favorable sub-factor(s);
- Evident weakness in country risk factors relative to those of stronger peers, defined as countries with a country risk assessment in the stronger of the two rounding choices. For example, if we are considering moving from '4.5' to '5', we would consider the weaknesses of the country risk factors relative to countries with a country risk assessment of '4'; or
- Emerging trends related to the factors listed in paragraph 52.

50. Examples of considerations that could lead to a positive or negative rounding adjustment on an assessment ending in .5 include:

- Currency risk: If the country's currency is highly volatile, it could contribute to a negative adjustment. For example, currencies that are prone to significant fluctuations, including currency devaluations, generally heighten financial risks for non-sovereign entities. Also, we would consider whether countries participating in currency unions have a growing risk of exiting the monetary union;
- Countries in transition: If a country is in a positive or negative transition that strengthens or weakens country risk and that is not already fully captured elsewhere in the sub-factors, we could adjust the country's indicative score,

although this would typically be a negative adjustment;

- Positive or negative business environment factors not adequately captured in the sub-factors, such as: labor market flexibility or rigidity; predictability and general level of the tax burden; infrastructure constraints, including lack of transportation infrastructure or adequate electricity access; trends in demographics; and the degree of interventionism or risk of negative interference with private companies. Although expropriation or nationalization risks are captured in the payment culture/rule-of-law risk score, the prevalence of such risks may also influence the rounding for the overall country risk assessment. In this potential adjustment for business environment factors, we would focus on factors that are relevant to a broad range of industries and regions in the country. Factors affecting a single industry (such as infrastructure relevant to a certain industry only, e.g., oil pipelines) would instead be reviewed under the relevant criteria for that entity; and
- Government financing, particularly government-directed lending and government support to non-banks, either through banks or directly. Even though the BICRA industry risk may reflect a negative effect of government-owned institutions dominating in the sector and restricting competition, we might view this government assistance, if deemed sustainable, as a supportive credit factor for non-banks.

51. In limited situations, we might round a preliminary country risk assessment ending in .75 to a stronger, rather than weaker, category (such as from '4.75' to '4') when the conditions and trends listed in paragraphs 48 and 50 are nearly all very positive. Similarly, we might round a preliminary country risk assessment ending in .25 to a weaker, rather than stronger, category (such as from '4.25' to '5') when the conditions and trends listed in paragraphs 49 and 50 are nearly all very negative.

52. In rare cases, the preliminary rounded country risk assessment might be adjusted weaker by one or more categories based on the following exceptional factors, in addition to considering the negative factors in paragraph 49:

- Heightened risk or presence of capital controls or a bank deposit freeze;
- Sharp deterioration in the private sector's access to domestic or external liquidity;
- Event risk (such as natural disaster or escalating external or domestic security risk, including war, social unrest, or political upheaval, when such risks are not fully captured in the institutional and governance effectiveness sub-factor); or
- The risk of leaving a currency union, in which any potential exit could lead to dramatic consequences for domestic non-sovereign entities with foreign currency holdings or debts. The magnitude of such an adjustment would be based on our view of these extraordinary events' duration and effect on the activities of the non-sovereign entities and transactions.

53. In rare cases when the typical sources of information are not fully available for us to determine the country risk assessment, such as an unrated sovereign, a country on which we do not publish BICRA scores, or missing external data, we might estimate the country risk assessment based on the available information and comparisons to countries we consider most similar.

RELATED CRITERIA AND RESEARCH

Corporate And Government Ratings

- Corporate Methodology, Nov. 19, 2013
- Ratings Above The Sovereign--Corporate And Government Ratings: Methodology And Assumptions, Nov. 19, 2013
- Project Finance Construction Methodology, Nov. 15, 2013
- Request for Comment: Project Finance Operations Methodology, Nov. 15, 2013
- Sovereign Government Rating Methodology And Assumptions, June 24, 2013
- Insurers: Rating Methodology, May 7, 2013
- Banking Industry Country Risk Assessment Methodology And Assumptions, Nov. 9, 2011
- Methodology For Rating International Local And Regional Governments, Sept. 20, 2010

Structured Finance Ratings

- Request For Comment: Methodology And Assumptions For Ratings Above The Sovereign--Single Jurisdiction Structured Finance, Oct. 14, 2013
- Weighing Country Risk In Our Criteria For Asset-Backed Securities, April 11, 2006

General Criteria

- Understanding Standard & Poor's Rating Definitions, June 3, 2009
- Nonsovereign Ratings That Exceed EMU Sovereign Ratings: Methodology And Assumptions, June 14, 2011
- Principles Of Credit Ratings, Feb. 16, 2011
- Criteria For Determining Transfer And Convertibility Assessments, May 18, 2009

These criteria represent the specific application of fundamental principles that define credit risk and ratings opinions. Their use is determined by issuer- or issue-specific attributes as well as Standard & Poor's Ratings Services' assessment of the credit and, if applicable, structural risks for a given issuer or issue rating. Methodology and assumptions may change from time to time as a result of market and economic conditions, issuer- or issue-specific factors, or new empirical evidence that would affect our credit judgment.