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Fitch Releases U.S Public Finance and GIG Transition and Default Study.

Fitch Ratings-New York-19 July 2017: The positive rating trend for U.S. public finance, which began in earnest in 2014, continued through 2016, according to a new Fitch Ratings study. Upgrades continued to outpace downgrades, mirroring the year-earlier pace. However, actions, both upgrades and downgrades, increased year-over-year.

The share of U.S. public finance security ratings upgraded reached 9.3% in 2016, which exceeded the 3.7% upgraded in 2015. Meanwhile, downgraded security ratings (4.2%) topped the 1.6% downgraded in 2015.

Fitch recorded a single U.S. public finance security rating default in 2016 - Puerto Rico's GO bonds. The resulting U.S. Public Finance annual default rate was 0.03%.

The report also includes information on Global Infrastructure and Project Finance (GIG) transition and default performance. Overall, GIG security rating activity was positive in 2016 with total upgrades nearly doubling downgrades. GIG securities affected by upgrades (6.5%) exceeded downgrades (3.4%).

The new study provides transition and default analysis on the performance of U.S. public finance and GIG in 2016 and over the long term period. The report provides summary statistics on the year's key rating trends.

The full report, 'U.S. Public Finance and Global Infrastructure and Project Finance 2016 Transition and Default Study' is available at 'www.fitchratings.com'.

Contact:

Charlotte Needham
Manager
Ratings Performance Analytics
+1-212-908-0794
Fitch Ratings, Inc.
33 Whitehall St.
New York, NY 10004

Jessalynn Moro
Managing Director
+1-212-908-0608

Olivier Delfour
Managing Director
+33 1 44 29 91 21

Media Relations: Sandro Scenga, New York, Tel: +1 212-908-0278, Email: sandro.scenga@fitchratings.com.

Additional information is available on www.fitchratings.com

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