

# Federated Hermes Ultrashort Bond Fund

12/31/24

## Fund facts

### Performance inception date

R6 Shares	2/22/00
Institutional Shares	2/22/00
Service Shares	5/31/97
A Shares	5/31/97

### Benchmark

Bloomberg US Short-Term Government/Corporate Index

### Morningstar category

Ultrashort Bond

### Lipper classification

Ultra-Short Obligations Funds

### Fund assets

\$2.9 billion

### Ticker symbols

R6 Shares - FULLX  
Institutional Shares - FULIX  
Service Shares - FULBX  
A Shares - FULAX

### Key investment team

Nicholas Tripodes, CFA  
Daniel Mastalski, CFA

### Yields (%)

30-day yield (R6)	5.07
30-day yield (IS)	5.06
30-day yield (SS)	4.96
30-day yield (A)	4.91

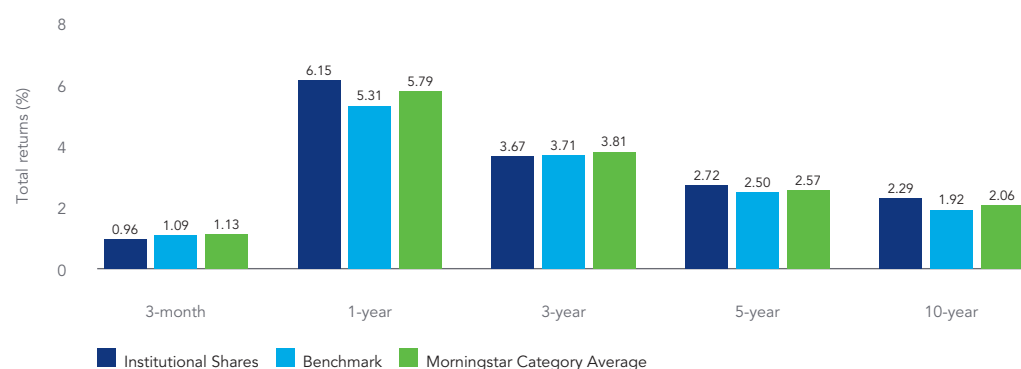
## Fund description

The fund seeks total return consistent with current income by investing primarily in a diversified portfolio of investment-grade debt, including asset- and mortgage-backed, corporate, Treasury and government-agency securities. Its portfolio is invested in sectors that offer the best risk/return balance, while maintaining a weighted average effective duration of one year or less.

## Average annual total returns (%)

Performance shown is before tax.

	3-month	YTD	1-year	3-year	5-year	10-year	Since inception	Expense ratio*	
								Before waivers	After waivers
<b>R6 Shares</b>	0.96	6.16	6.16	3.68	2.73	2.29	2.66	0.41	0.36
<b>Institutional Shares</b>	0.96	6.15	6.15	3.67	2.72	2.29	2.66	0.45	0.37
<b>Service Shares</b>	1.05	6.16	6.16	3.60	2.64	2.02	2.66	0.55	0.47
<b>A Shares</b>	1.03	6.10	6.10	3.55	2.58	1.93	2.49	0.65	0.52
<b>Benchmark</b>	1.09	5.31	5.31	3.71	2.50	1.92	–	–	–



## Calendar year total returns (%)

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<b>Institutional Shares</b>	6.15	5.90	-0.89	0.24	2.38	3.75	1.69	1.82	1.74	0.32
<b>Benchmark</b>	5.31	5.19	0.69	0.10	1.31	2.69	1.99	0.98	0.80	0.26
<b>Morningstar Category Average</b>	5.79	5.96	-0.14	0.20	1.34	3.08	1.61	1.44	1.31	0.21

Performance quoted represents past performance, which is no guarantee of future results. Investment return and principal value will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be lower or higher than what is stated. To view performance current to the most recent month-end, and for after-tax returns, contact us or visit [FederatedHermes.com/us](https://FederatedHermes.com/us). See the prospectus for other fees and expenses that apply to a continued investment in the fund. Total returns for periods of less than one year are cumulative.

\* The fund's expense ratio is from the most recent prospectus. The expense ratio may reflect voluntary fee waivers and/or expense reimbursements determined by the fund's Advisor and its affiliates. The voluntary waivers and/or reimbursements, if applicable, are in effect up to but not including the later of 12/1/25 or the date of the fund's next effective prospectus.



Not FDIC Insured • May Lose Value • No Bank Guarantee

# Investment approach

### Multiple alpha sources

- The ultrashort bond investment process is integrated with Federated Hermes' fixed-income effort (the Alpha Pod process) as broad market and macroeconomic forces drive returns
- Seeks diversified sources of alpha across sector allocation, security selection, duration management and yield-curve strategy

### Portfolio positioning

- Invests primarily in asset-backed, mortgage-backed, corporate, Treasury and government agency securities and maintains a dollar-weighted average effective portfolio duration of one year or less
- Generally invests less than 10% in below investment-grade securities\*
- Allocates across fixed and floating-rate securities based on the manager's view on the potential direction of interest rates

### Tenured team with long-term results

- Team-based approach focused by sector to extract value from each step of the process
- Federated Hermes' fixed-income philosophy and process has a 50-year heritage
- The fixed-income management team averages 28 years of experience and have worked at Federated Hermes for an average of 18 years

\* Per the prospectus, the fund is permitted to invest up to 35% in below investment-grade securities.

## Portfolio statistics

Weighted average effective maturity	1.1 yrs.
Weighted average effective duration	0.9 yrs.
Weighted average spread duration	1.3 yrs.
Weighted average bond price	\$99.58

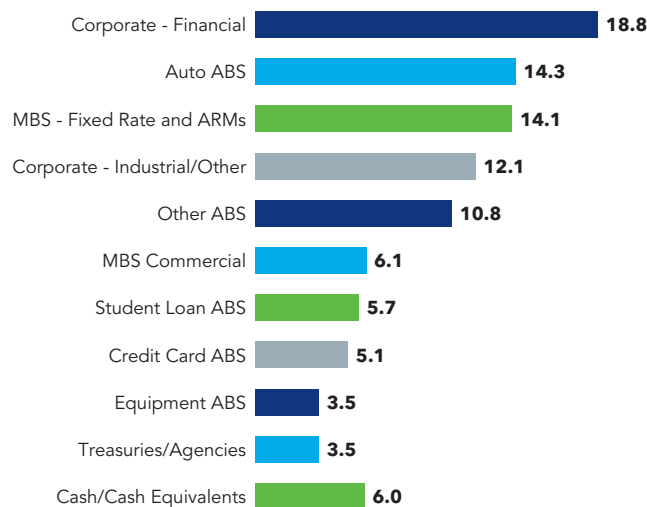
## Top holdings (%)

U.S. Treasury Floater due 1/31/25	3.5
FHLMC 5396 FQ, Floating Rate Note due 4/25/54	1.2
FNMA 2024-22 FA, Floating Rate Note due 5/25/54	1.2
GNMA1 2024-114 FA, Floating Rate Note due 7/20/54	1.2
FHLMC 5449 FE, Floating Rate Note due 7/25/54	1.1
FNMA 2024-22 FB, Floating Rate Note due 5/25/54	1.1
Navient Student Loan Trust 2021-BA, Class A, 0.940% due 7/15/69	1.1
FHLMC FHR GF, Floating Rate Note due 7/25/54	1.0
Nelnet Student Loan Trust 2021-DA, Class AFL, Floating Rate Note due 4/20/62	1.0
Navient Student Loan Trust 2021-FA, Class A, 1.110% due 2/18/70	0.9
Total % of portfolio	13.3

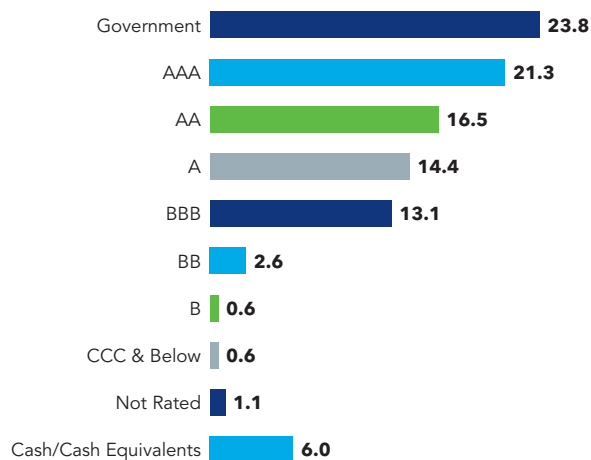
## Interest rate basis (%)

Fixed rate	46.4
Floating rate	53.6

## Sector weightings (%)



## Quality breakdown<sup>1</sup> (%)



Quality breakdown does not apply to Equity or Cash/Cash Equivalents.

Portfolio composition is based on net assets at the close of business on 12/31/24 and may not necessarily reflect adjustments that are routinely made when presenting net assets for formal financial statement purposes. Because this is a managed portfolio, the investment mix will change.

## Highlights

- Fund performance reflected an increase in short-term market yields, which finished the quarter higher, as the rate on the US 2-year Treasury note increased from 3.64% at 9/30/2024 to 4.24% at 12/31/24
- Short-term credit spreads tightened somewhat during the quarter. The spread (option-adjusted) on the Bloomberg 1-3 Year Corporate Index (B1-3CI) decreased from 56 basis points at 9/30/24 to 52 at 12/31/24. Similarly, the spread on the Bloomberg ABS Index dropped from 64 basis points to 44 over the course of the reporting period
- The Federal Reserve (Fed) cut rates during the fourth quarter of 2024, as the target rate was reduced from 4.75-5.00% to 4.25-4.50%. After aggressively tightening policy through 2022 and the beginning of 2023, the Fed has now cut rates by 1.00%, after holding them steady since July 2023. While the future path of rates is uncertain, we continue to believe that the next move from the Fed will most likely be an easing of monetary policy

## Looking back

Fund performance was slightly negative in the fourth quarter due to the increase in front-end rates. Modestly tighter corporate credit spreads aided performance. The fund's exposure to spread product benefitted performance as both corporate and asset-backed securities (ABS) provided additional income over comparable duration government securities. The yield on the 2-year Treasury bond increased from 3.64% at the end of the third quarter to 4.24% by the end of the fourth quarter of 2024. With the move higher in rates, the fund's capital value dropped by \$0.03 to \$9.27. With modest tightening during the period, short corporate bonds (B1-3C1 tightened from 0.56% on 9/30/2024 to 0.52% on 12/31/2024) outperformed comparable duration government securities through price appreciation and the additional income generated during the quarter. Similarly, ABS spreads (Bloomberg ABS Index) tightened by 20 basis points, ending the quarter at 0.44%. The carry from these bonds also supported the performance of the portfolio. We also saw a continuation of heavy new issue supply during the period in both investment-grade corporates and ABS, however, investor demand for high-quality assets proved to be robust and the supply was well-received.

The average duration of the fund during the quarter was 0.90 years, longer than that of the fund's competitive benchmark, the Bloomberg Short-Term Government/Corporate Index (BSTGCI), which averaged 0.49 years during the period. Management has maintained the fund's duration at levels longer than the previous year under the assumption that the Fed is now in a cutting cycle and the peak federal funds rate is in the review mirror. Similarly, short-term market yields have probably hit their cycle highs. Additionally, duration remains longer than the midpoint of the fund's normal 0.4–1.0 year range.

## Performance

Federated Hermes Ultrashort Bond Fund's return on IS Shares at net asset value (NAV) for the fourth quarter was 0.96%, versus returns on the ICE Bank of America Merrill Lynch 1-Year Treasury Bill Index of 0.89% and the BSTGCI of 1.09%. The average return for the Lipper Ultrashort Bond category was 1.11%.

### Performance contributors

- The sector allocation added 26 basis points. The outcome reflected the fund's bias toward out-of-index credit-sensitive securities, particularly ABS, in an environment where the spread on these securities provided positive carry during the period
- Security selection added 5 basis points in excess return, as several corporate holdings outperformed the corporate portion of the benchmark

### Performance detractors

- The fund's interest-rate positioning, combining both duration and yield curve (i.e., holding certain securities with maturities either shorter or longer than that of the benchmark in a rising yield environment) subtracted 31 basis points of performance relative to the benchmark. The fund's duration was consistently longer than that of the benchmark throughout the quarter during which front-end rates rose

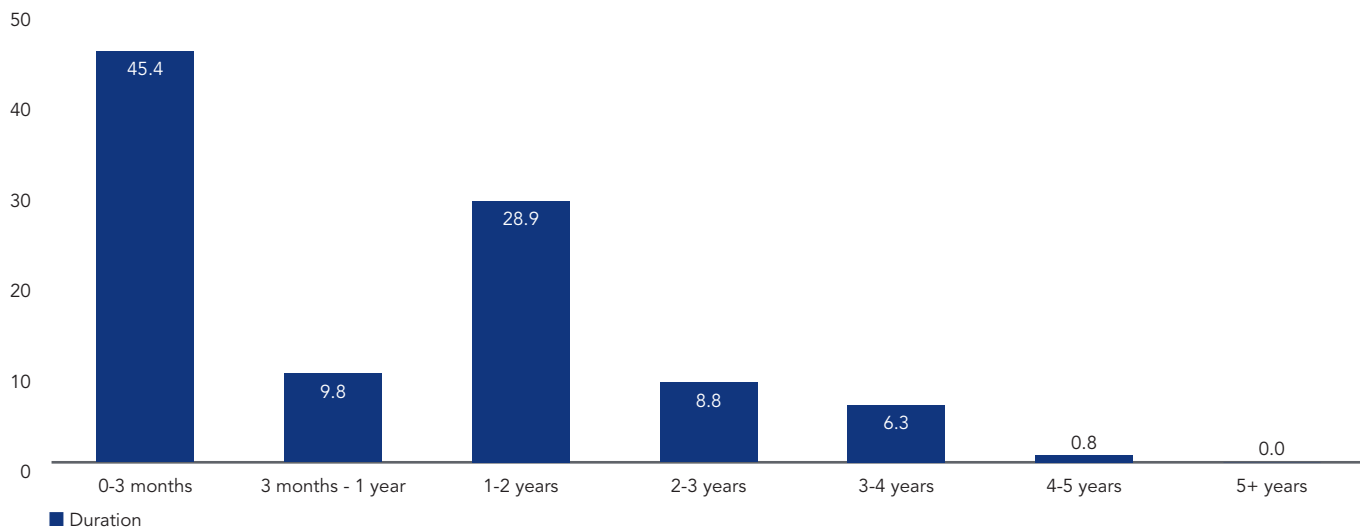
*Performance quoted represents past performance, which is no guarantee of future results. Investment return and principal value will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be lower or higher than what is stated. Other share classes may have experienced different returns than the share class presented. To view performance current to the most recent month-end, and for after-tax returns, contact us or visit [FederatedHermes.com/us](https://FederatedHermes.com/us).*

## How we are positioned

The Federated Hermes Ultrashort Bond Fund's investment philosophy reflects the belief that in all but the most difficult of environments, the income earned by utilizing a modestly credit-oriented portfolio should be able to more than offset capital fluctuation and provide a return which exceeds that of a cash investment. This proved to not be the case during the fourth quarter as the fund underperformed a non-credit comparable, the Treasury component of the BSTGCI (1.09% return). With the modest spread tightening during the quarter and periods of credit volatility seen in the past year, the general overweight to credit remains in place, though investments having lower credit quality continue to remain below long-run allocations. Interest-rate sensitivity has been raised to levels higher than the general fund midpoint of 0.4-1.0 years (as well as remaining long of the benchmark index) as the Fed's easing cycle appears to be underway. We still believe high-quality corporate and ABS securities will offer attractive carry (i.e., yield income) which can result in a positive contribution to total return for the portfolio.

See disclosure section for important disclosures and definitions.

## Duration profile (%)



## Risk statistics

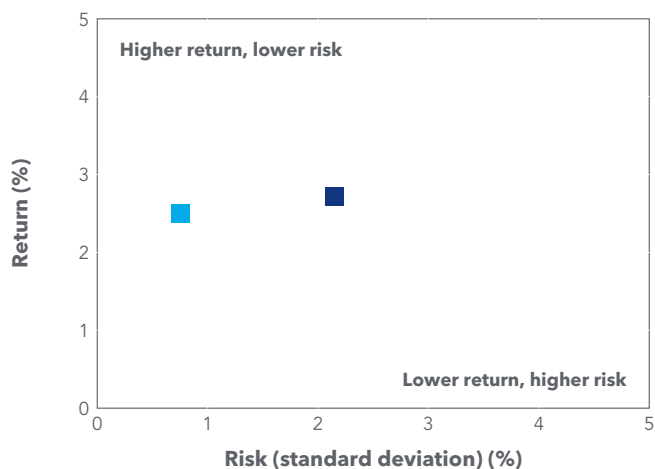
	3-year	5-year	7-year	10-year
<b>Standard deviation</b>	1.27	2.15	1.83	1.55
<b>Alpha</b>	0.33	0.19	0.27	0.39
<b>Sharpe ratio</b>	-0.45	0.04	0.13	0.68

Sources: Federated Hermes, Morningstar, Inc.

Fund vs. Bloomberg US Short-Term Government/Corporate Index

See disclosure section for important definitions.

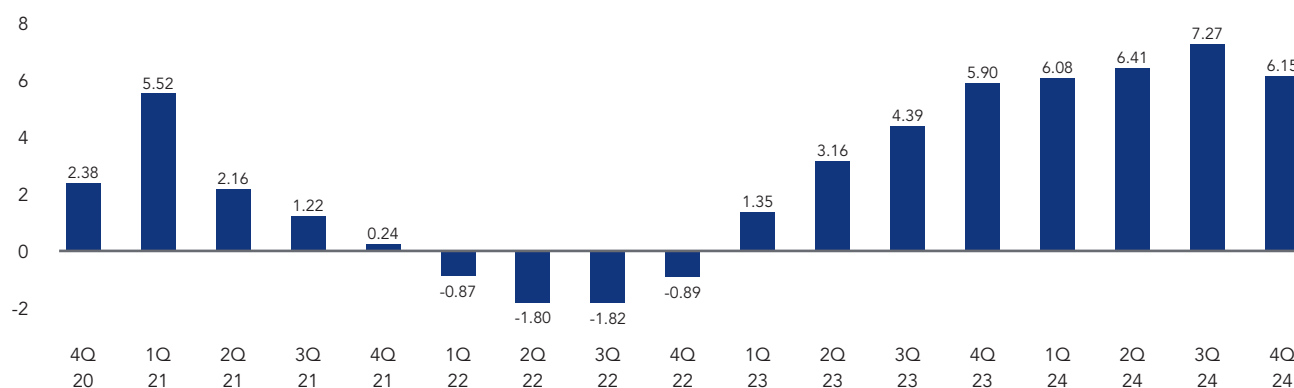
## 5-year risk/return



	Risk (%)	Return (%)
■ Federated Hermes Ultrashort Bond Fund (IS)	2.15	2.72
■ Bloomberg US Short-Term Government/Corporate Index	0.75	2.50

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## 12-month rolling returns - IS (%)



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## Category rankings

Morningstar Ultrashort Bond Category		1-year	3-year	5-year	10-year
<b>R6 Shares</b>	Morningstar Category % Rank	27	68	36	-
	Morningstar Category Rank	73 of 254 funds	138 of 202 funds	65 of 184 funds	-
<b>IS Shares</b>	Morningstar Category % Rank	27	69	37	28
	Morningstar Category Rank	75 of 254 funds	140 of 202 funds	67 of 184 funds	35 of 111 funds
<b>A Shares</b>	Morningstar Category % Rank	28	78	56	66
	Morningstar Category Rank	82 of 254 funds	158 of 202 funds	102 of 184 funds	75 of 111 funds

Lipper Ultra-Short Obligations Funds		1-year	3-year	5-year	10-year
<b>R6 Shares</b>	Lipper Classification % Rank	23	73	36	-
	Lipper Classification Rank	36 of 162 funds	108 of 147 funds	49 of 136 funds	-
<b>IS Shares</b>	Lipper Classification % Rank	24	74	38	26
	Lipper Classification Rank	38 of 162 funds	109 of 147 funds	51 of 136 funds	20 of 76 funds
<b>A Shares</b>	Lipper Classification % Rank	29	85	59	75
	Lipper Classification Rank	46 of 162 funds	125 of 147 funds	80 of 136 funds	57 of 76 funds

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Rankings are based on total return and do not take sales charges into account.

<sup>1</sup>The ratings agencies that provided the ratings are S&P Global Ratings, Moody's and Fitch. When ratings vary, the highest rating is used. Credit ratings of A or better are considered to be high credit quality; credit ratings of BBB are good credit quality and the lowest category of investment grade; credit ratings BB and below are lower-rated securities ("junk bonds"); and credit ratings of CCC or below have high default risk. The credit quality breakdown does not give effect to the impact of any credit derivative investments made by the fund.

30-day yield (also known as "SEC yield") for A Shares is a compounded and annualized figure calculated according to a formula set by the SEC. The formula requires use of a specific methodology for calculating dividends and interest earned, and expenses accrued, during the period, and reflects the maximum offering price per fund share. The standardized computation is designed to facilitate yield comparisons among different funds. In the absence of temporary expense waivers or reimbursements, the 30-day yield would have been 4.78% for A Shares, 5.02% for R6 Shares, 4.98% for Institutional Shares, and 4.88% for Service Shares.

Prior to October 27, 1998, the fund was named Federated Limited Duration Government Fund with an investment concentration in government securities. The fund was reconfigured to maintain an ultrashort duration (one year or less) with a revised investment policy of purchasing both higher and lower quality fixed income securities.

The fund's A Shares commenced operations on October 8, 2002. For the period prior to the commencement of operations of the A Shares, the performance information shown is for the fund's Service Shares, adjusted to reflect the sales charges (for maximum offering price performance) that were applicable to the fund's A Shares until December 1, 2019 and expenses of the A Shares.

The fund's R6 Shares commenced operations on May 29, 2019. For the periods prior to the commencement of operations of the R6 Shares, the performance information shown is for the fund's Institutional Shares. The performance of the Institutional Shares has not been adjusted to reflect the expenses applicable to the R6 Shares since the R6 Shares have a lower expense ratio than the expense ratio of the Institutional Shares.

The fund may invest in Federated Hermes portfolios that are not available to the public and provide for more effective diversification than is available through the purchase of individual securities. Where applicable, the fund holdings reflect exposure to underlying securities held by the portfolios.

## Federated Hermes Ultrashort Bond Fund

### A word about risk

Mutual funds are subject to risks and fluctuate in value.

Bond prices are sensitive to changes in interest rates, and a rise in interest rates can cause a decline in their prices.

The fund is not a "money market" mutual fund. Some money market mutual funds attempt to maintain a stable net asset value through compliance with relevant Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) rules. The fund is not governed by those rules, and its shares will fluctuate in value.

The value of some mortgage-backed securities may be particularly sensitive to changes in prevailing interest rates, and although the securities are generally supported by some form of government or private insurance, there is no assurance that private guarantors or insurers will meet their obligations.

High-yield, lower-rated securities generally entail greater market, credit/default and liquidity risks, and may be more volatile than investment-grade securities.

### Definitions

**Alpha** shows how much or how little return is generated, given the risk a portfolio takes. A portfolio with an alpha greater than 0 has earned more than expected given its beta—meaning the portfolio has generated excess return without increasing risk. A portfolio with a negative alpha is producing a lower return than would be expected given its risk.

**Sharpe ratio** is calculated by dividing a fund's annualized excess return by the fund's annualized standard deviation. The higher the Sharpe ratio, the better the fund's historical risk adjusted performance.

**Standard deviation** is a historical measure of the variability of returns relative to the average annual return. A higher number indicates higher overall volatility.

**Weighted average bond price** is the weighted average of all individual bond prices within a portfolio.

**Weighted average effective duration** (sometimes called "option-adjusted duration") is a measure of a security's price sensitivity to changes in interest rates calculated using a model that recognizes that the probability of a bond being called or remaining outstanding until maturity may vary if market interest rates change, and that makes adjustments based on a bond's embedded options (e.g., call rights, or in the case of a mortgage-backed security, the probability that homeowners will prepay

their mortgages), if any, based on the probability that the options will be exercised. A fund's weighted average effective duration will equal the market value weighted average of each bond's effective duration in the fund's portfolio. As with any model, several assumptions are made so the weighted average effective duration of a fund in the Federated Hermes family of funds may not be comparable to other funds outside of the Federated Hermes family of funds. Securities with longer durations are more sensitive to changes in interest rates than securities of shorter durations.

**Weighted average effective maturity** is the average time to maturity of debt securities held in the fund.

**Weighted average spread duration** is the average of the spread durations of the underlying securities.

**Yield curve** is a graph showing the comparative yields of securities in a particular class according to maturity. Securities on the long end of the yield curve have longer maturities.

**Bloomberg US Short-Term Government/Corporate Index** represents securities that have fallen out of the US Government/Corporate Index because of the standard minimum one year maturity constraint. Sectors include treasuries, agencies, industrials, utilities and financial institutions. Indexes are unmanaged and cannot be invested in directly.

### Ratings and rating agencies

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