

T. ROWE PRICE FUNDS SICAV

## Global High Yield Bond Fund – ESG Report

Providing transparency on Environment, Social and Governance aspects of the Fund

As at 31 December 2023

### ESG INTEGRATION APPROACH

- The Global High Yield Bond Fund uses ESG integration as part of its investment process. This means incorporating environmental, social and governance factors to enhance investment decisions. Our philosophy is that ESG factors are a component of the investment decision—meaning that they are not the sole driver of an investment decision, nor are they considered separately from more traditional analysis.
- The process of ESG integration takes place on two levels: first, with our research analysts as they incorporate environmental, social and governance factors into issuer valuations and ratings; and, second, with the portfolio manager as he balances these ESG factor exposures at the portfolio level. Both the analysts and portfolio manager are able to leverage dedicated, in-house resources to assist them in analyzing ESG criteria.
- Our ESG specialist teams provide investment research on ESG issues at the company level and on thematic topics. Additionally, they have built tools to help proactively and systematically analyze the environmental, social, and governance factors that could impact our investments. The foundation of the analysis is a proprietary flagging tool called the Responsible Investing Indicator Model (RIIM). It covers over 15,000 companies and pulls from data sets that are not in the wheelhouse of traditional financial analysis. These data sets include:
  - ESG performance data (e.g., number of accidents, carbon emissions, strength of whistle-blower programs, etc.);
  - ESG targets (e.g., plans to reduce carbon emissions, increase diversity, etc.)
  - ESG incidents and controversies (e.g., environmental fines paid, local community controversies/protests against a company, etc.)
- Our Global High Yield Bond Fund seeks to generate alpha by focusing on proprietary, bottom up research to identifying companies offering long-term performance potential. The High Yield investment team examines each potential investment; each holding; and the entire portfolio with an approach deeply rooted in fundamental analysis along with a macro and industry top-down view. These processes naturally incorporate an analysis of each company's environmental, social, and governance factors and tend to yield an ESG-friendly portfolio. However, our High Yield investment team collaborates closely with our ESG specialists to augment their work. We also screen the portfolio using T. Rowe Price's proprietary RIIM analysis at regular intervals. This helps us understand the ESG characteristics of the portfolio and makes us aware of any exposures to specific ESG factors or how these ESG factors may impact a company's business operations and market performance.
- The fund is classified as Article 8 according to the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation. Although the fund does not have sustainable investment as an objective, the promotion of environmental and social characteristics is achieved through the fund's commitment to maintain at least 10% of the value of its portfolio invested in Sustainable Investments. The fund avoids issuers whose activities we may consider harmful to the environment and/or society through the application of our proprietary screen, the T. Rowe Price Responsible Exclusion List.

**INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE:** To maximise the value of its shares through both growth in the value of, and income from, its investments.

**INVESTMENT PROCESS:** The fund is actively managed and invests mainly in a diversified portfolio of high yield corporate bonds from issuers around the world, including emerging markets. Although the fund does not have sustainable investment as an objective, the promotion of environmental and/or social characteristics is achieved through the fund's commitment to maintain at least 10% of the value of its portfolio invested in sustainable investments, as defined by the SFDR. In addition to the E/S characteristics promoted, the fund also applies the investment manager's proprietary responsible screen (the T. Rowe Price Responsible Exclusion List). The fund may use derivatives for hedging, efficient portfolio management and investment purposes. The fund may also use derivatives to create synthetic short positions in debt securities and credit indices. For full investment objective and policy details refer to the prospectus. The manager is not constrained by the fund's benchmark, which is used for performance comparison purposes only.

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## **RECENT COMPANY ENGAGEMENTS**

We maintain a regular dialogue with the management teams of companies represented across the portfolio. Our investment-driven engagement program frequently identifies targets through our proprietary RIIM analysis, governance screening and analysts' fundamental research. While we engage with companies in a variety of different contexts, ESG engagement focuses on learning about, encouraging or exchanging perspectives on the environmental practices, corporate governance or social issues affecting their business.

While most of the meetings we hold with company managements will include some discussion of ESG topics, we differentiate meetings held with a heavy focus on ESG, meaning ESG issues were the sole items on the agenda or made up a meaningful part of the meeting. Agenda items are classified as "meaningful" when they take up a significant portion of the meeting or are a significant factor in the investment case.

The following are selected examples of recent engagements with companies held in or considered for the portfolio. The examples are not meant to be representative of every engagement held, but to illustrate the types of ESG engagements we are having with the managements of our investment companies.

## Altice (3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2023 Engagement)

<b>Focus</b>	Environment, Social, Governance
<b>Company Description</b>	Altice is a French telecommunications firm.
<b>Engagement Objective</b>	We engaged with the company to discuss a recent business ethics controversy; various environmental issues; and ESG governance.
<b>Participants</b>	From Altice: Head of Investor Relations  From T. Rowe Price: Responsible Investing Analyst
<b>Engagement Outcome</b>	<p>We engaged with Altice to discuss a criminal investigation into Altice Portugal that came to light in July 2023. At the time, Portuguese prosecutors detained numerous company executives, including Altice's cofounder and former chief operating officer, following a multiyear probe into corruption, money laundering, and tax fraud, according to media reports. Our goal was to encourage disclosure on the company's probe into Altice Portugal and its directors. Additionally, we sought to get an update on environmental topics (e.g., energy and emissions) and ESG governance and to impart our views on ESG best practice.</p> <p>We sought to get a better grasp of the company's perspective of the criminal investigation unfolding in Portugal. In addition to the investigation by Portuguese officials, Altice is conducting an internal investigation in every region where the company operates. Results of both are still pending, and management expects to provide more information from the internal probe in its third-quarter investor call in November.</p> <p>Regarding ESG governance, the company explained that Altice International and Altice France are separate entities, each with their own dedicated ESG resources. Both entities have a carbon neutrality goal in place for scope 1-2<sup>1</sup> emissions but measuring scope 3 remains a challenge. At the group level, the board (mainly the chief financial officer) oversees ESG strategy. In terms of targets, net zero and the Science Based Targets initiative are part of the company's long-term plan. Altice France has set a carbon neutrality goal across scope 1-2 emissions by 2040 but relies on offsets, whereas Altice International has a carbon neutrality goal with an unclear timeline. Additionally, Altice France said it aims to provide full disclosure of scope 3 emissions by year-end and set some science-based targets by 2024.</p> <p>The engagement informed our investment research on Altice and gave us a better grasp of the reputational, financial, and regulatory risks facing the company. Our meeting also gave us an opportunity to impart our views on best practices on ESG matters.</p> <p>We will monitor the company's progress on our recommendations, which include the following: to disclose the results of the internal investigation into Altice Portugal, to align climate disclosure with recommendations contained in the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures, and for Altice France to disclose scope 3 emissions. Moreover, we will monitor for the company to set science-based scope 3 emissions reduction goals and a net zero target.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Scope 1: direct emissions from owned or controlled sources; scope 2: indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, steam, or cooling; scope 3: all other indirect emissions.

## Dave & Buster's (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2023 Engagement)

<b>Focus</b>	Environment, Social
<b>Company Description</b>	Dave & Buster's is a U.S. sports bar-themed restaurant chain.
<b>Engagement Objective</b>	We engaged with the company to discuss its inaugural ESG report and to offer disclosure recommendations.
<b>Participants</b>	From Dave & Buster's: Vice President, Investor Relations and Treasurer  From T. Rowe Price: Responsible Investing Analyst
<b>Engagement Outcome</b>	<p>We engaged with Dave &amp; Buster's to discuss its first ESG report released in early 2023. We found that the company's disclosure in the report was still limited. We provided feedback on material areas where we believed management could improve disclosure and introduce targets.</p> <p>Dave &amp; Buster's does not disclose any emissions data. We recommended that the company consider disclosing these data and introduce emissions reduction targets (e.g., net zero). The company said it would disclose emissions data by fiscal 2024. Regarding water usage, Dave &amp; Buster's discloses data and said it was focused on improving water efficiency to reduce costs, though it did not commit to setting any targets. We told the company that its peers were introducing targets to improve their water efficiency.</p> <p>Regarding plastics and packaging use, Dave &amp; Buster's does not offer any commentary though it said it has a small footprint in this area since it primarily operates as an eat-in (as opposed to a takeout) restaurant. We noted that its peers have disclosed these data and set waste reduction targets. The company also said it used Styrofoam and other environmentally unfriendly materials and was looking into improving the sustainability of its packaging.</p> <p>On the supply chain front, Dave &amp; Buster's discloses the percentage of its suppliers publicly certified to third-party standards but has no targets to improve these figures. We recommended that it introduce targets to show that it is improving its sourcing initiatives. Disclosure on nutrition initiatives took up half a page in the ESG report, and investor relations admitted that the disclosure was vague. We told the company that its peers were introducing reformulation targets and advised it to consider disclosing data on antimicrobial resistance, an issue not addressed in its ESG report.</p> <p>Dave &amp; Buster's ESG report provides Sustainability Accounting Standards Board-aligned disclosure. We noted that T. Rowe Price recommends Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) standards, with the caveat that we will start to recommend International Sustainability Standards Board standards. The company declined to fully commit to introducing TCFD-aligned reporting and instead said it would integrate the "best elements" of these standards plus any U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission-mandated disclosure in its next report.</p> <p>We are pleased that Dave &amp; Buster's seeks to improve its ESG disclosure albeit disappointed that it appears to be years away from setting any targets. Given that management is having talks on introducing targets, we do not think it's unrealistic for it to have targets within three years. We gave several recommendations to bring Dave &amp; Buster's in line with industry best practice and will monitor the company's progress on our key asks.</p>

The specific securities identified and described do not represent all of the securities purchased, sold, or recommended for the SICAV sub-fund, and no assumption should be made that the securities identified and discussed were or will be profitable.

## ESG RIIM PROFILE

The T. Rowe Price Responsible Investing Indicator Model (RIIM) rates companies, governments and securitized assets in a traffic light system measuring their environmental, social, and governance profile and flagging issuers with elevated risks. For certain types of investments, including, but not limited to, cash, currency positions, and particular types of derivatives, an ESG analysis may not be relevant or possible due to a lack of data. Where ESG considerations are integrated into the investment research process, we may conclude that other attributes of an investment outweigh ESG considerations when making investment decisions.

	Portfolio		Benchmark	
	No. of securities	% weight	No. of securities	% weight
● Green	263	65.5	920	58.2
● Orange	100	26.1	348	22.3
● Red	0	0.0	22	1.1
● Not in scope	24	4.3	333	16.9
● Not covered	4	1.1	25	1.5
● Cash	1	3.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,648</b>	<b>100.0</b>

● No/few Flags    ● Medium Flags    ▲ High Flags

The comparator benchmark of the Fund is the J.P. Morgan Global High Yield Index. The manager is not constrained by the fund's benchmark, which is used for performance comparison purposes only.

## SUSTAINABILITY INDICATOR

The fund is classified as Article 8 according to the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulations (SFDR).

The sustainability indicator used by the fund is a minimum of 10% of the value of the fund's portfolio held in securities that the investment manager identifies as sustainable investments.

The percentage exposure of the fund to sustainable investments is:

	Target Minimum Exposure %	Fund Exposure %
Sustainable Investments	10.0%	22.5%
Environmental Objectives	0.5%	9.3%
Social Objectives	0.5%	13.2%

**RISKS - The following risks are materially relevant to the fund (refer to prospectus for further details):** Contingent convertible bond - Contingent Convertible Bonds may be subject to additional risks linked to: capital structure inversion, trigger levels, coupon cancellations, call extensions, yield/valuation, conversions, write downs, industry concentration and liquidity, among others. Credit - Credit risk arises when an issuer's financial health deteriorates and/or it fails to fulfill its financial obligations to the fund. Default - Default risk may occur if the issuers of certain bonds become unable or unwilling to make payments on their bonds. Derivative - Derivatives may be used to create leverage which could expose the fund to higher volatility and/or losses that are significantly greater than the cost of the derivative. Distressed or defaulted debt securities - Distressed or defaulted debt securities may bear substantially higher degree of risks linked to recovery, liquidity and valuation. High yield bond - High yield debt securities are generally subject to greater risk of issuer debt restructuring or default, higher liquidity risk and greater sensitivity to market conditions. Interest rate - Interest rate risk is the potential for losses in fixed-income investments as a result of unexpected changes in interest rates. Liquidity - Liquidity risk may result in securities becoming hard to value or trade within a desired timeframe at a fair price. Total Return Swap - Total return swap contracts may expose the fund to additional risks, including market, counterparty and operational risks as well as risks linked to the use of collateral arrangements.

**General fund risks - to be read in conjunction with the fund specific risks above.** ESG and sustainability - ESG and Sustainability risk may result in a material negative impact on the value of an investment and performance of the fund. Geographic concentration - Geographic concentration risk may result in performance being more strongly affected by any social, political, economic, environmental or market conditions affecting those countries or regions in which the fund's assets are concentrated. Hedging - Hedging measures involve costs and may work imperfectly, may not be feasible at times, or may fail completely. Investment fund - Investing in funds involves certain risks an investor would not face if investing in markets directly. Management - Management risk may result in potential conflicts of interest relating to the obligations of the investment manager. Market - Market risk may subject the fund to experience losses caused by unexpected changes in a wide variety of factors. Operational - Operational risk may cause losses as a result of incidents caused by people, systems, and/or processes.

## ADDITIONAL DISCLOSURES

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