

Fixed income in 2025: still focusing on the short end?



Philippe Berthelot

Head of Credit &
Money Market



Fairouz Yahiaoui

Money Market
Portfolio Manager

At end of 2024, the Eurozone monetary policy was still rather accommodative with gradual interest rate cuts. After peaking at 4% in 2023, European Central Bank (ECB) rates reached 3% at year-end 2024 and are expected to fall further in 2025 (*source Ostrum AM, December 2024*).

The macroeconomic environment still demonstrates a degree of resilience, especially in the United States with the US economy still on a favourable trend. We believe that growth is very positive despite US Federal Reserve (Fed) rates still above 4%.

In the Eurozone, the trend is less favourable, but companies are still showing positive results despite two years of high rates. Inflation, meanwhile, has fallen sharply since the post pandemic peak of almost 10% (summer 2022) and appears to be returning to levels close to 2% (*source Ostrum AM, December 2024*). There has also been a slight recovery linked to energy prices and inflation in services and wages, which seem to be holding up at higher levels.

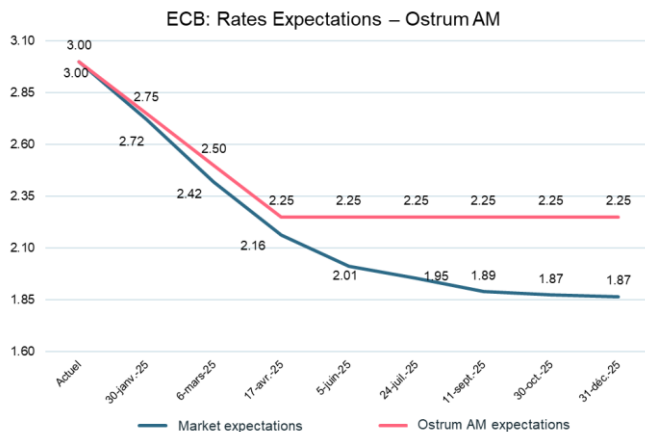
Finally, we expect default rates to remain below their historical average, while *Technicals* remain strong with large inflows, which should continue to support spreads in the credit asset class in 2025.

With short term interest rates above 3% early 2025, investors still seem to prefer short-term solutions such as money market investments, given that volatility is very close to zero in a context of considerable instability in interest rate expectations. **Fairouz Yahiaoui, money market portfolio manager says:** " Expectations of interest rate cuts by the market at the end of 2024, at 1.5% by the end of 2025, seemed a little pessimistic. Consequently, for money market strategies, we have favoured floating rate bonds so that we do not see a negative re rating in the event of a rise in rates on the short end". Predictions embedded in Euribor future contracts show only three rate cuts in 2025, down from six few weeks earlier, suggesting that **cash yields are likely to stay higher for longer**. The market is expecting them to remain above 2% for the coming months and years, which is why we believe that money market investments remain an attractive asset allocation option.

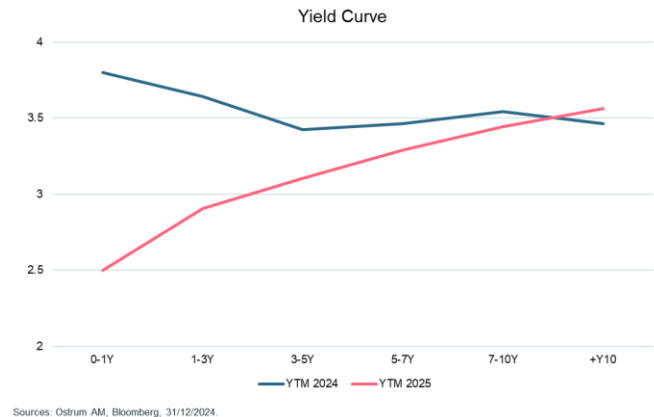
On the other hand, long-term yields have risen sharply since the end of 2024. The yield curve is now steepening, with longer rates regaining interest compared to a recent situation where the curve was flat to inverted. As a result, with yields starting to steepen a little, investors are beginning to 'pick up duration' by investing in longer maturities to capture a more attractive yield.

Philippe Berthelot, CIO Credit & Money Market, notes: " We are seeing more and more investors 'riding the yield curve' i.e. leaving the very short end to increase the maturities of their investments. In the current environment of yield curve normalisation, we think this is appropriate. However, given the high volatility of interest rate expectations, we think investments in intermediate maturities, between 1 and 3 years, seem the most appropriate in terms of returns/risks". As a result, investors are still prioritising money market solutions but are gradually following the steepening of yields with slightly longer investments.

In conclusion, given the solid fundamentals of issuers, weak growth in the euro area but which should be supported by more accommodative monetary policies as well as supportive technical factors, credit seems to be an asset class that could still be preferred by investors. With high interest rate volatility, geopolitical instability and a possible resurgence of inflation following the uncertainty surrounding Trump's election and his programme deemed inflationary, **we still prefer short-term solutions as we enter 2025, but with a possible and gradual increase in duration over the coming months and years.**



Sources: Ostrum AM, Bloomberg, 31/12/2024



Sources: Ostrum AM, Bloomberg, 31/12/2024.

Additional notes

Ostrum Asset Management

Asset management company regulated by AMF under n° GP-18000014 – Limited company with a share capital of 50 938 997 €. Trade register n°525 192 753 Paris – VAT: FR 93 525 192 753 – Registered Office: 43, avenue Pierre Mendès-France, 75013 Paris – www.ostrum.com

This document is intended for professional, in accordance with MIFID. It may not be used for any purpose other than that for which it was conceived and may not be copied, distributed or communicated to third parties, in part or in whole, without the prior written authorization of Ostrum Asset Management.

None of the information contained in this document should be interpreted as having any contractual value. This document is produced purely for the purposes of providing indicative information. This document consists of a presentation created and prepared by Ostrum Asset Management based on sources it considers to be reliable.

Ostrum Asset Management reserves the right to modify the information presented in this document at any time without notice, which under no circumstances constitutes a commitment from Ostrum Asset Management.

The analyses and opinions referenced herein represent the subjective views of the author(s) as referenced, are as of the date shown and are subject to change without prior notice. There can be no assurance that developments will transpire as may be forecasted in this material. This simulation was carried out for indicative purposes, on the basis of hypothetical investments, and does not constitute a contractual agreement from the part of Ostrum Asset Management.

Ostrum Asset Management will not be held responsible for any decision taken or not taken on the basis of the information contained in this document, nor in the use that a third party might make of the information. Figures mentioned refer to previous years. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Any reference to a ranking, a rating or an award provides no guarantee for future performance and is not constant over time. Reference to a ranking and/or an award does not indicate the future performance of the UCITS/AIF or the fund manager.

Under Ostrum Asset Management's social responsibility policy, and in accordance with the treaties signed by the French government, the funds directly managed by Ostrum Asset Management do not invest in any company that manufactures, sells or stocks anti-personnel mines and cluster bombs.

Natixis Investment Managers

This material has been provided for information purposes only to investment service providers or other Professional Clients, Qualified or Institutional Investors and, when required by local regulation, only at their written request. This material must not be used with Retail Investors.

In the E.U.: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers International or one of its BRANCH offices listed below. Natixis Investment Managers International is a portfolio management company authorized by the Autorité des Marchés Financiers (French Financial Markets Authority - AMF) under no. GP 90-009, and a simplified joint-stock company (société par actions simplifiée - SAS) registered in the Paris Trade and Companies Register under no. 329 450 738, Registered office: 43 avenue Pierre Mendès France, 75013 Paris. Germany: Natixis Investment Managers International, Zweigniederlassung Deutschland (Registration number: HRB 129507). Registered office: Senckenberganlage 21, 60325 Frankfurt am Main. Italy: Natixis Investment Managers International Succursale Italiana (Registration number: MI-2637562). Registered office: Via Adalberto Catena, 4, 20121 Milan, Italy. Netherlands: Natixis Investment Managers International, Dutch BRANCH (Registration number: 000050438298), Registered office: Stadsplateau 7, 3521AZ Utrecht, the Netherlands. Spain: Natixis Investment Managers International S.A., Sucursal en España (Registration number: NIF W0232616C), Registered office: Serrano n°90, 6th Floor, 28006 Madrid, Spain. Luxembourg: Natixis Investment Managers International, Luxembourg BRANCH (Registration number: B283713), Registered office: 2, rue Jean Monnet, L-2180 Luxembourg, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. Belgium: Natixis Investment Managers International, Belgian BRANCH (Registration number: 1006.931.462), Gare Maritime, Rue Picard 7, Bte 100, 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium.

In Switzerland: Provided for information purposes only by Natixis Investment Managers, Switzerland Sàrl (Registration number: CHE-114.271.882), Rue du Vieux Collège 10, 1204 Geneva, Switzerland or its representative office in Zurich, Schweizergasse 6, 8001 Zürich.

In the British Isles: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers UK Limited which is authorised and regulated by the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA firm reference no. 190258) - registered office: Natixis Investment Managers UK Limited, Level 4, Cannon Bridge House, 25 Dowgate Hill, London, EC4R 2YA. When permitted, the distribution of this material is intended to be made to persons as described as follows:

in the United Kingdom: this material is intended to be communicated to and/or directed at investment professionals and professional investors only; **in Ireland:** this material is intended to be communicated to and/or directed at professional investors only; **in Guernsey:** this material is intended to be communicated to and/or directed at only financial services providers which hold a license from the Guernsey Financial Services Commission; **in Jersey:** this material is intended to be communicated to and/or directed at professional investors only; **in the Isle of Man:** this material is intended to be communicated to and/or directed at only financial services providers which hold a license from the Isle of Man Financial Services Authority or insurers authorised under section 8 of the Insurance Act 2008.

In the DIFC: Provided in and from the DIFC financial district by Natixis Investment Managers Middle East (DIFC BRANCH) which is regulated by the DFSA. Related financial products or services are only available to persons who have sufficient financial experience and understanding to participate in financial markets within the DIFC, and qualify as Professional Clients or Market Counterparties as defined by the DFSA. No other Person should act upon this material. Registered office: Unit L10-02, Level 10, ICD Brookfield Place, DIFC, PO Box 506752, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

In Japan: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers Japan Co., Ltd. Registration No.: Director-General of the Kanto Local Financial Bureau (kinsho) No.425. Content of Business: The Company conducts investment management business, investment advisory and agency business and Type II Financial Instruments Business as a Financial Instruments Business Operator.

In Taiwan: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers Securities Investment Consulting (Taipei) Co., Ltd., a Securities Investment Consulting Enterprise regulated by the Financial Supervisory Commission of the R.O.C. Registered address: 34F., No. 68, Sec. 5, Zhongxiao East Road, Xinyi Dist., Taipei City 11065, Taiwan (R.O.C.), license number 2020 FSC SICE No. 025, Tel. +886 2 8789 2788.

In Singapore: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers Singapore Limited (NIM Singapore) having office at 5 Shenton Way, #22-05/06, UIC Building, Singapore 068808 (Company Registration No. 199801044D) to distributors and qualified investors for information purpose only. NIM

Singapore is regulated by the Monetary Authority of Singapore under a Capital Markets Services Licence to conduct fund management activities and is an exempt financial adviser. Mirova Division (Business Name Registration No.: 53431077W) and Ostrum Division (Business Name Registration No.: 53463468X) are part of NIM Singapore and are not separate legal entities. This advertisement or publication has not been reviewed by the Monetary Authority of Singapore.

In Hong Kong: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers Hong Kong Limited to professional investors for information purpose only.

In Australia: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers Australia Pty Limited (ABN 60 088 786 289) (AFSL No. 246830) and is intended for the general information of financial advisers and wholesale clients only.

In New Zealand: This document is intended for the general information of New Zealand wholesale investors only and does not constitute financial advice. This is not a regulated offer for the purposes of the Financial Markets Conduct Act 2013 (FMCA) and is only available to New Zealand investors who have certified that they meet the requirements in the FMCA for wholesale investors. Natixis Investment Managers Australia Pty Limited is not a registered financial service provider in New Zealand.

In Korea: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers Korea Limited (Registered with Financial Services Commission for General Private Collective Investment Business) to distributors and qualified investors for information purpose only.

In Colombia: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers International Oficina de Representación (Colombia) to professional clients for informational purposes only as permitted under Decree 2555 of 2010. Any products, services or investments referred to herein are rendered exclusively outside of Colombia. This material does not constitute a public offering in Colombia and is addressed to less than 100 specifically identified investors.

In Latin America: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers International.

In Chile: Esta oferta privada se inicia el día de la fecha de la presente comunicación. La presente oferta se acoge a la Norma de Carácter General N° 336 de la Superintendencia de Valores y Seguros de Chile. La presente oferta versa sobre valores no inscritos en el Registro de Valores o en el Registro de Valores Extranjeros que lleva la Superintendencia de Valores y Seguros, por lo que los valores sobre los cuales ésta versa, no están sujetos a su fiscalización. Que por tratarse de valores no inscritos, no existe la obligación por parte del emisor de entregar en Chile información pública respecto de estos valores. Estos valores no podrán ser objeto de oferta pública mientras no sean inscritos en el Registro de Valores correspondiente.

In Mexico: Provided by Natixis IM Mexico, S. de R.L. de C.V., which is not a regulated financial entity, securities intermediary, or an investment manager in terms of the Mexican Securities Market Law (Ley del Mercado de Valores) and is not registered with the Comisión Nacional Bancaria y de Valores (CNBV) or any other Mexican authority. Any products, services or investments referred to herein that require authorization or license are rendered exclusively outside of Mexico. While shares of certain ETFs may be listed in the Sistema Internacional de Cotizaciones (SIC), such listing does not represent a public offering of securities in Mexico, and therefore the accuracy of this information has not been confirmed by the CNBV. Natixis Investment Managers is an entity organized under the laws of France and is not authorized by or registered with the CNBV or any other Mexican authority. Any reference contained herein to "Investment Managers" is made to Natixis Investment Managers and/or any of its investment management subsidiaries, which are also not authorized by or registered with the CNBV or any other Mexican authority.

In Uruguay: Provided by Natixis Investment Managers Uruguay S.A. Office: San Lucar 1491, Montevideo, Uruguay, CP 11500. The sale or offer of any units of a fund qualifies as a private placement pursuant to section 2 of Uruguayan law 18,627.

In Brazil: Provided to a specific identified investment professional for information purposes only by Natixis Investment Managers International. This communication cannot be distributed other than to the identified addressee. Further, this communication should not be construed as a public offer of any securities or any related financial instruments. Natixis Investment Managers International is a portfolio management company authorized by the Autorité des Marchés Financiers (French Financial Markets Authority - AMF) under no. GP 90-009, and a simplified joint-stock company (société par actions simplifiée - SAS) registered in the Paris Trade and Companies Register under no. 329 450 738. Registered office: 43 avenue Pierre Mendès France, 75013 Paris.

The above referenced entities are business development units of Natixis Investment Managers, the holding company of a diverse line-up of specialised investment management and distribution entities worldwide. The investment management subsidiaries of Natixis Investment Managers conduct any regulated activities only in and from the jurisdictions in which they are licensed or authorized. Their services and the products they manage are not available to all investors in all jurisdictions.

Although Natixis Investment Managers believes the information provided in this material to be reliable, including that from third party sources, it does not guarantee the accuracy, adequacy, or completeness of such information.

The provision of this material and/or reference to specific securities, sectors, or markets within this material does not constitute investment advice, or a recommendation or an offer to buy or to sell any security, or an offer of any regulated financial activity. Investors should consider the investment objectives, risks and expenses of any investment carefully before investing. The analyses, opinions, and certain of the investment themes and processes referenced herein represent the views of the individual(s) as of the date indicated. These, as well as the portfolio holdings and characteristics shown, are subject to change and cannot be construed as having any contractual value. There can be no assurance that developments will transpire as may be forecasted in this material. The analyses and opinions expressed by external third parties are independent and does not necessarily reflect those of Natixis Investment Managers. Any past performance information presented is not indicative of future performance.

This material may not be distributed, published, or reproduced, in whole or in part.

All amounts shown are expressed in USD unless otherwise indicated.



www.ostrum.com