

# WisdomTree Research

## Investment Grade Indexes Rebalance [November 2020]

### WisdomTree U.S. Corporate Bond Index (WFCIG)

### WisdomTree U.S. Short-term Corporate Bond Index (WFCIGS)

WisdomTree U.S. Corporate Bond Indexes are structured to screen the available universe of investment-grade corporate bonds for sufficient liquidity and fundamentals, and then tilt toward those bonds with attractive income and valuation characteristics.

On November 30 2020, the WisdomTree U.S. Corporate Bond Index (“WFCIG”) and the WisdomTree U.S. Short-term Corporate Bond Index (“WFCIGS”) rebalanced in accordance with their [Index methodologies](#). Respectively, the Indexes serve as the underlying benchmarks for the WisdomTree U.S. Corporate Bond Fund (“WFIG”) and the WisdomTree U.S. Short-Term Corporate Bond Fund (“SFIG”).

#### KEY REBALANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- With the November 2020 rebalance, the yields for both WFCIG and WFCIGS increased marginally. Durations for WFCIG and WFCIGS both extended 0.2 years.
- The largest change in sector exposure for WFCIG was a 0.9% increase in Utilities. For WFCIGS, the largest sector changes were a 0.6% increase in both Real Estate and Communications.
- During the rebalance, WFCIG and WFCIGS selected companies in each sector that have better cash flow, employ lower leverage, and are more profitable.
- Each corporate bond Index offered yields and durations comparable to its market cap benchmark, with a continued strategic under-weight in Energy.
- The next quarterly rebalance for both Indexes is scheduled for February 2021.

#### INDICATIVE INDEX STATS

Post-rebalance, the yield for WFCIG increased 5bps and its duration increased 0.2 to 10.4 years. The yield for WFCIGS increased 4bps to 0.72% and its duration extended by 0.2 to 2.7 years.

INDEX STATISTICS	Projected Index		Current Index		Benchmark	
	WFCIG	WFCIGS	WFCIG	WFCIGS	C0A0	CVA0
Yield to Worst	2.07%	0.72%	2.02%	0.68%	1.88%	0.89%
Duration	10.4	2.7	10.2	2.5	8.5	2.8
Minimum Par Size (\$Mil)	350	350	350	350	250	250
Issuer Cap	5%	5%	5%	5%	-	-
# of Bonds	3885	1279	3772	1255	8815	3174

Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg, Merrill Lynch, with data as of 11/30/2020. C0A0: BofA Merrill Lynch U.S. Corporate Index, which tracks the performance of U.S. dollar denominated investment grade corporate debt securities issued in the U.S. CVA0: BofA Merrill Lynch 1-5 Year U.S. Corporate Index, which represents the subset of C0A0 with remaining term to final maturity of less than 5 years. Past performance is not indicative of future results. You cannot invest directly in an index. Index performance does not represent actual fund or portfolio performance. A fund or portfolio may differ significantly from the securities included in the index. Index performance assumes reinvestment of dividends but does not reflect any management fees, transaction costs or other expenses that would be incurred by a portfolio or fund, or brokerage commissions on transactions in fund shares. Such fees, expenses and commissions could reduce returns. Projected Index represents the projected index after rebalance. Current index represents the latest index before rebalance.

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### INDEX SECTOR BREAKDOWNS

WisdomTree's investment-grade corporate bond Indexes experienced few changes in sector weights after rebalancing. Within WFCIG, the largest changes in exposure were a 0.9% increase in Utilities and a 0.8% decrease in Technology. Within WFCIGS, the largest changes in exposure were a 0.6% increase in Real Estate and Communications. The largest reduction in exposure for WFCIGS was a 0.5% decrease in Energy.

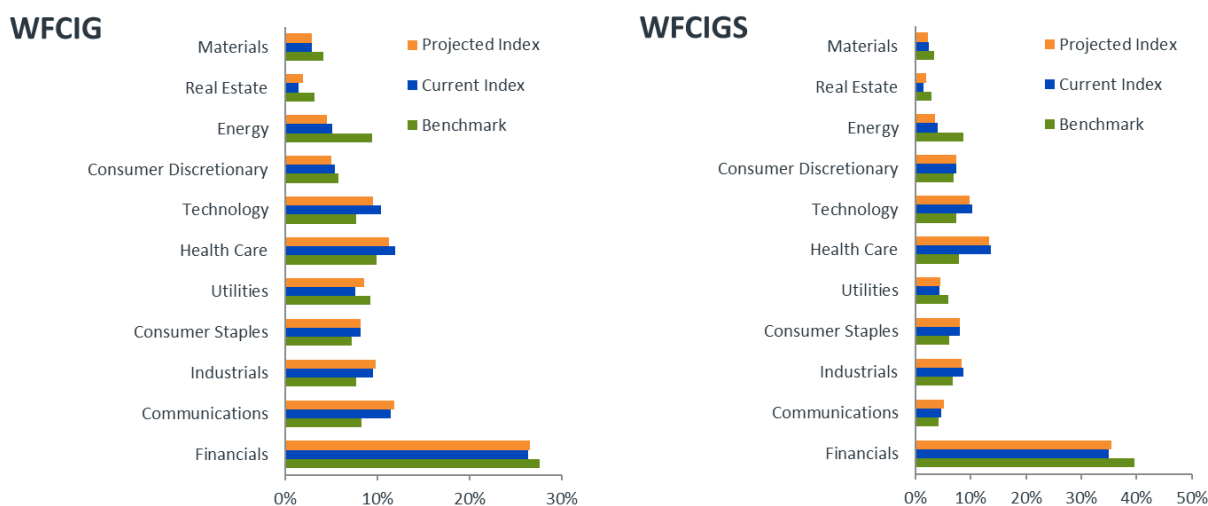
### Most Significant Sector Changes After Rebalance

WFCIG			WFCIGS		
<b>Top 3 Exposure Increases</b>			<b>Top 3 Exposure Increases</b>		
1	Utilities	0.9%	1	Real Estate	0.6%
2	Real Estate	0.5%	2	Communications	0.6%
3	Communications	0.4%	3	Financials	0.5%
<b>Top 3 Exposure Reductions</b>			<b>Top 3 Exposure Reductions</b>		
1	Technology	-0.8%	1	Energy	-0.5%
2	Health Care	-0.7%	2	Technology	-0.4%
3	Energy	-0.5%	3	Industrials	-0.4%

Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg, with data as of 11/30/2020. You cannot invest directly in an index. Exposures subject to change.

Compared to the market cap benchmark, WFCIG is under-weight Energy (-4.9%) and Real Estate (-1.3%), and over-weight Communications (+3.6%) and Industrials (+2.2%). WFCIGS is under-weight Energy (-5.2%) and Financials (-4.1%), and over-weight Health Care (+5.1%) and Technology (+2.4%).

### Sector Breakdown Comparisons, Before and After Rebalance



Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg, Merrill Lynch, with data as of 11/30/2020. You cannot invest directly in an index. Exposures subject to change. The WFCIG benchmark is represented by C0A0. The WFCIGS benchmark is represented by CVA0.

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### CHANGES IN FUNDAMENTAL FACTORS

For investment-grade corporates, we use free cash flow over debt service as a measure of solvency, total debt over total assets as a measure of leverage, and return on invested capital as a measure of profitability.

Over the past three months, we generally saw little change from a solvency perspective. The most notable increase in leverage was in the Consumer Discretionary sector. Profitability dropped in the Energy sector, otherwise there was relatively little change across the other sectors.

### Changes to Fundamental Factors by Sectors (Public Universe)



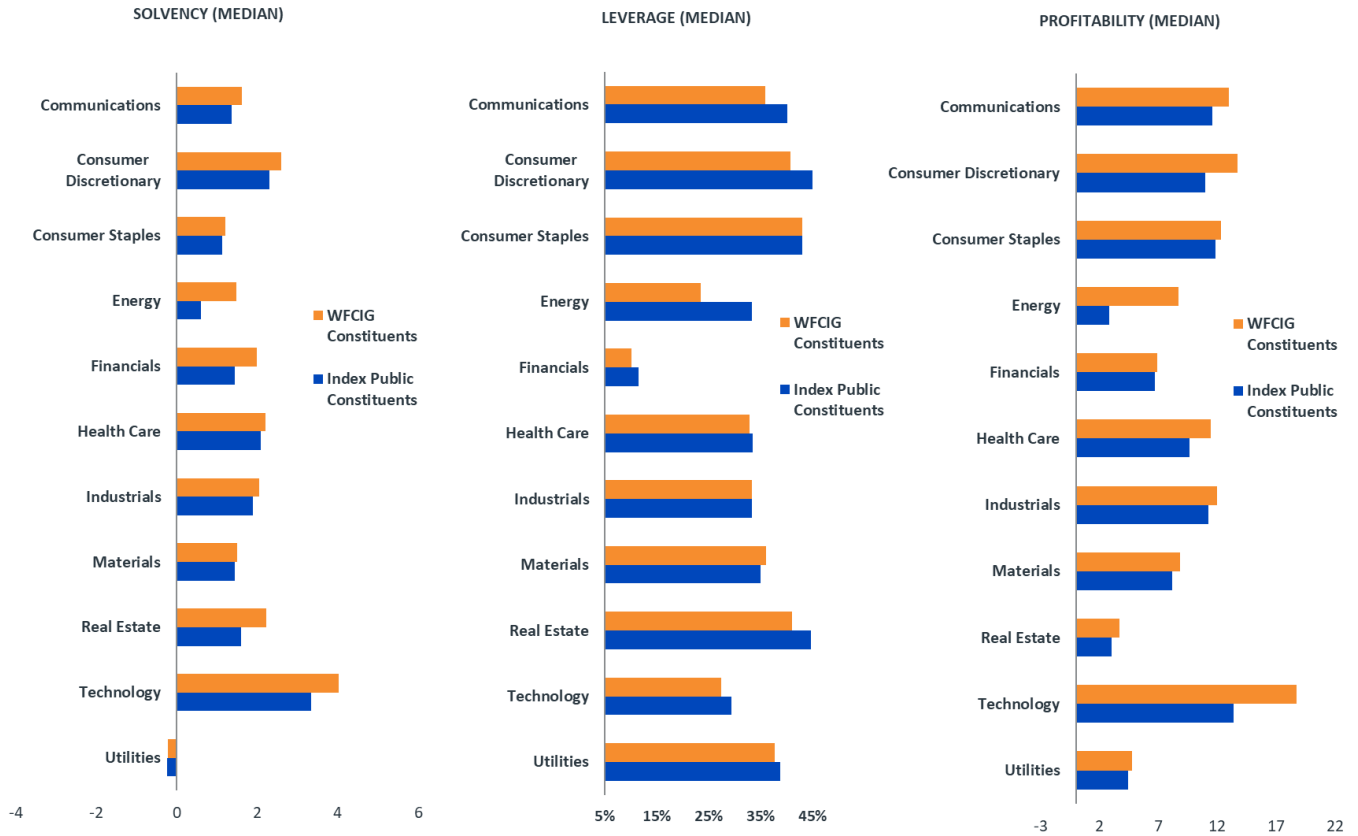
Sources: WisdomTree, FactSet, Bloomberg, with data as of 11/30/2020. Free cash flow over debt service is used as a measure of solvency. Subject to change.

At each rebalance, we eliminate the bottom 20% of companies in each sector with the lowest fundamental factor scores. As a result, WFCIG and WFCIGS select companies in each sector that have better cash flows, employ lower leverage, and are more profitable relative to the benchmark.

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### Comparison of Factor Medians by Sectors – WisdomTree Index vs Market Cap Universe



Sources: WisdomTree, FactSet, Bloomberg, with data as of 11/30/2020. Free cash flow over debt service is used as a measure of solvency. Index Public Constituents represents a subset of the Bloomberg U.S. Corporate Bond Index that excludes those with private parent companies. The Bloomberg U.S. Corporate Bond Index is a rules-based market value-weighted index engineered to measure the performance of the U.S. investment-grade corporate bond market.

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### UNIVERSE BREAKDOWN SHOWCASING REBALANCE PROCESS

In the following panels we show the indexing process for WFCIG. To review, we start with a broad investment-grade corporate universe with minimum size and years-to-maturity constraints, and calculate the combined factor scores for public companies based on fundamental factors. For each broad sector, we cut the bottom 20% of the companies with the lowest factor scores, and then tilt toward those with the most favorable risk-adjusted income characteristics.



Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg, data as of 11/30/2020, the weight determination date of the rebalance process. Past performance is not indicative of future results. You cannot invest directly in an index. Reference Universe defined as the Bloomberg U.S. Corporate Bond Index, a rules-based market value-weighted index engineered to measure the investment-grade, fixed-rated, taxable corporate bond market, excluding bonds that did not meet the ratings criteria in the WisdomTree methodology. Universe of Public Issuers represents a subset of the Market Cap Benchmark that excludes those with private parent companies. Post Fundamental Cut is the portfolio of issues with at least \$500M outstanding that remain after cutting the bottom 20% by fundamentals. The Post Income Tilt represents the final index after adding in the income tilt. Benchmark is defined as the BofA Merrill Lynch U.S. Corporate Index, which tracks the performance of U.S. dollar denominated investment grade corporate debt securities issued in the U.S. Exposures subject to change.

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### Glossary:

**Basis Point:** 1/100th of 1 percent

**Cash Flow:** a measure of how much cash a business generates after taking into account all the necessary expenses, including net capital expenditures.

**Duration** is a measure of the sensitivity of the price (the value of principal) of a fixed income investment to a change in interest rates. Effective duration is a calculation used to approximate the actual, modified duration of a callable bond. It takes into account that future interest rate changes will affect the expected cash flows for a callable bond.

**Credit Quality** is the underlying credit worthiness of a bond, reflecting its risk of default. Credit quality is typically represented by the credit ratings of a bond that are assigned by rating agencies such as Moody's or Standard & Poor's.

**Yield to worst:** The rate of return generated assuming a bond is redeemed by the issuer on the least desirable date for the investor.

**Investment Grade:** A rating given to a municipal or corporate bond. It is a relatively favorable rating by either Moody's or Standard & Poor's indicating a higher chance an issuer performs interest and principal obligations as promised by the terms of the debt issuance.

**Liquidity:** The degree to which an asset or security can be bought or sold in the market without affecting the asset's price. Liquidity is characterized by a high level of trading activity. Assets that can be easily bought or sold are known as liquid assets.

**Fundamentals:** Attributes related to a company's actual operations and production as opposed to changes in share price.

**Rebalance:** An index is created by applying a certain set of selection and weighting rules at a certain frequency. WisdomTree rebalances, or re-applies its rules-based selection and weighting process on an annual basis.

**Yield:** The income return on an investment. Refers to the interest or dividends received from a security that is typically expressed annually as a percentage of the market or face value.

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