

iA Wealth Monthly Market Snapshot

Monthly Overview

It was an eventful month of July with China and the U.S. restarting trade negotiations and the Federal Reserve lowering U.S. interest rates for the first time in 11 years, resulting in a mixed month for equity markets globally. Canadian stocks were fairly muted, as the S&P/TSX Composite eeked out a 0.1% gain during the month. At the same time, the U.S. market, as measured by the S&P 500, was 1.7% higher, in Canadian dollar terms, reaching an all-time high during the period. International markets, meanwhile, faced headwinds in July, with the MSCI EAFE sliding 0.9% in CAD terms.

Consumer discretionary, information technology and materials were the top performing Canadian sectors in July, with respective gains of 3.4%, 3.2% and 2.3%. Only three sectors were in the red during the month, but that included the influential energy space which posted a 4% decline, as natural gas prices trended lower while crude oil prices remained stable. The healthcare sector saw the biggest drop for the period, falling 13.3%, as cannabis stocks weakened.

Technology and telecom stocks led the way for the U.S. market, with respective gains of 3.7% and 3.5% (all returns in this and the following paragraphs are in CAD). Energy and healthcare were the only two S&P 500 sectors that declined during the month, falling 1.5% and 1.3%, respectively.

U.S. corporate earnings for the second quarter started to roll out in July, with the majority of S&P 500-listed companies having reported by the end of the month. More than three-quarters of those companies reported earnings that exceeded analysts' expectations, however, aggregate Q2 earnings are on pace to decline for the second straight quarter – something that hasn't happened since 2016.

Looking abroad, the European market saw underperformance in July, with the MSCI Europe index falling 1.4% and the European Central Bank suggesting a rate cut could be on the horizon. Trade-related concerns pressured emerging markets stocks during the period, with the MSCI EM index falling 1.3%.

Canadian bond yields ended the month flat, leading to a muted return of 0.2% for the FTSE Canada Universe Bond index. The high yield index sported a gain in July, while global bonds slipped by 0.3%.

Canada's gross domestic product grew 0.2% in May, as the nation's economy expanded for a third straight month. Canadian job numbers faltered in June, as the unemployment rate rose to 5.5%, after hitting a four-decade low of 5.4% the previous month. The benchmark overnight rate held steady at 1.75%, marking the sixth straight pause from the Bank of Canada, as it indicated that the Canadian economy is on its own path and will not be following any moves from the Fed to lower rates, in the near term.

The U.S. Federal Reserve lowered its benchmark interest rate by a quarter-point on July 31st in an attempt to stimulate the world's largest economy. The move represented the first rate cut since the global financial crisis, with the central bank highlighting the trade war and below-target inflation as motives for the decision.

August 2019

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Monthly Market Statistics

Data to July 31, 2019, unless otherwise indicated

Since the fourth quarter of last year, Canadian mutual fund investors have been pulling money out of equity offerings by the boatload. Net redemptions for equity funds were close to \$12 billion between October 2018 to the end of June 2019. The market turmoil late last year clearly left many investors skittish, and despite the sharp bounce back in stock prices during the first half

of 2019, the level of reluctance to move back into the equity market remains high. Conversely, a whopping \$9.1 billion has flowed into bond funds during the first half of the year as investors pursued the defensive characteristics of fixed income. Falling yields have juiced returns for bond funds, so we see little in the cards to trigger a reversal in these fund flow trends.

Chart I: Chart of the Month – Mutual Fund Net Sales / Net Redemptions (in millions)

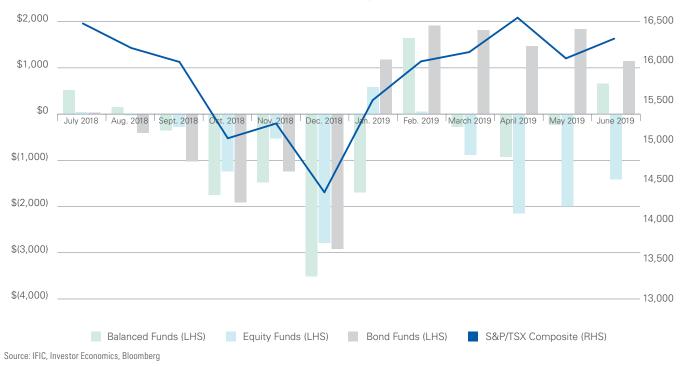
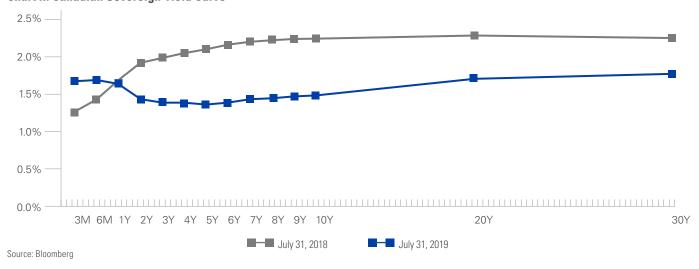


Chart II: Canadian Sovereign Yield Curve



Monthly Market Statistics

Data to July 31, 2019, unless otherwise indicated

Table I: Equity Index Returns (% in CAD)

Index	1 Mo	3 Mo	6 Mo	YTD	1Yr	3Yr	5Yr	3Yr Std Dev
S&P/TSX Composite	0.1	-1.1	5.6	14.5	-0.2	4.0	1.4	8.9
S&P/TSX Small Cap	3.0	2.4	4.4	12.2	-6.8	-3.0	-3.0	10.9
S&P 500	1.7	-0.8	10.2	14.7	7.0	11.3	13.3	12.1
MSCI EAFE	-0.9	-3.2	3.6	6.5	-4.4	4.2	3.4	10.9
MSCI World	0.9	-1.6	7.9	12.1	2.7	8.5	9.0	11.2
MSCI World Small Cap	0.9	-2.9	4.8	11.4	-3.9	7.3	9.1	13.1
MSCI Europe	-1.4	-4.2	4.4	6.8	-5.3	4.2	2.6	14.3
MSCI EM	-1.3	-5.8	-1.2	3.6	-3.6	6.1	3.3	13.7
MSCI AC Asia	-0.6	-4.3	1.2	4.2	-4.1	5.3	5.1	11.4

Source: Bloomberg

Table II: Fixed Income Returns (% in CAD)

Index	1 Mo	3 Мо	6 Mo	YTD	1Yr	3Yr	5Yr	3Yr Std Dev
FTSETMX Canada Universe Bond	0.2	2.8	5.3	6.7	8.3	2.4	3.8	3.7
Barclays Global Agg	-0.3	3.3	3.7	5.3	5.7	1.3	1.3	4.5
Barclays High Yield Very Liquid Index	0.5	1.5	5.8	11.3	7.4	6.4	4.4	4.6

Source: Bloomberg

Table III: Commodity Prices (Prices and Returns in USD)

Commodity	07/31/2019 Price (\$)	MoM Change (%)	YoY Change (%)
WTI Crude Oil/BBL	58.58	0.2	-14.8
Natural Gas/mmBTU	2.23	-3.2	-19.7
Copper/pound	2.67	-1.5	-5.8
Silver/oz	16.41	7.6	5.4
Gold/oz	1426.10	0.9	16.5

Source: Bloomberg

Table IV: Economic Data

Canada	
Real GDP - Q1 (q/q ann. % change)	0.4
Consumer Prices June (y/y % change)	2.0
Unemployment Rate, June 2019	5.5
United States	
Real GDP - Q2 (q/q ann. % change)	2.1
Consumer Prices June (y/y % change)	1.6
Unemployment Rate, June 2019	3.7

Source: Bloomberg, Stats Canada

Table V: One Month Sector Returns (% in CAD)

Sector	S&P/TSX Composite returns	S&P 500 returns
Consumer Discretionary	3.4	1.3
Consumer Staples	1.5	2.8
Energy	-4.0	-1.5
Financials	0.6	2.7
Health Care	-13.3	-1.3
Industrials	1.8	1.0
Info Tech	3.2	3.7
Materials	2.3	0.0
Real Estate	1.8	2.1
Telecom Services	-1.1	3.5
Utilites	1.6	0.0

Source: Bloomberg

Table VI: Exchange Rates

Cross	07/31/2019	6 Mos Ago	1Yr Ago
USD/CAD	1.32	1.31	1.30
EUR/CAD	1.46	1.50	1.52
GBP/CAD	1.60	1.72	1.71
CAD/JPY	82.48	82.97	86.00

Source: Bloomberg

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Recommended List: The list presents a selection of funds that we believe are among the best of their peers and offer unique characteristics that can add value when used in a well-diversified investment portfolio tailored to a client's investment objectives.

Hold: The fund remains on the Recommended List,

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from client's portfolios.

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