

Canada Business Forecast Report Q2 2014

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Abstracts

Core Views

The ongoing theme for the Canadian economy is 'rebalancing'. The mix of growth will shift away from private consumption and toward net exports, as household balance sheets remain under pressure, and US demand picks up. Growth could well disappoint in 2014, however, and we are below consensus on the rate of economic expansion in both 2014 and 2015.

We are becoming somewhat concerned at the moribund recent performance of business investment, but expect an improvement in gross fixed capital formation going into 2014 and 2015, as the recovery in the US buoys corporate sentiment as well as external demand for Canadian exports going into 2014.

Among developed states, and in stark contrast to the neighbouring US, Canada has an enviable fiscal record. We see very limited risk of a Canadian fiscal crisis we see the federal budget balance returning to surplus by 2015-16.

Major Forecast Changes

We have downgraded our 2014 real GDP growth forecast for Canada to 2.1% from 2.3%, and for 2015 to 2.3% from 2.5%.

Key Risks To Outlook

Downside Risks To Growth Forecast: Domestically, a hard landing for the housing market could push the Canadian economy into recession. Externally, a relapse in US growth would hit Canada's attempt at economic rebalancing particularly hard, as it would severely hurt demand for Canadian exports and damage corporate investment



sentiment. A hard landing in China would cause a commodities collapse, further damaging Canadian terms of trade. Downside Risks To Long-Term Forecast: The major historic weakness of Canadian economic growth has been low productivity. Although we expect a pick-up in corporate investment in the near future, without a structural improvement in business investment and key national industries, potential GDP growth could be closer to 2.0% than the 2.1-2.3% that we expect in 2014/15.



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Strong Foundation, But Some Challenges From Within

Canada has one of the highest long-term political ratings in the world, reflecting its history of stable governance and strong institutions. Nevertheless, Canada faces political challenges over the coming decade, including a potential shift in power from east to west.

CHAPTER 2: ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

SWOT Analysis
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We expect an improvement in Canadian real GDP growth in 2014 and 2015, with expansion of 2.1% and 2.3% in those years respectively (up from 1.7% in both 2012 and 2013). However, our forecasts are below consensus, and we expect domestic demand to come under pressure as overlever aged households take a breather, the housing market cools , and commodity prices fail to recover.

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