COMMENCEMENT FINANCIAL PLANNING LLC

Q1 Quarterly Market Review

First Quarter 2018

Quarterly Market Review

First Quarter 2018

This report features world capital market performance and a timeline of events for the past quarter. It begins with a global overview, then features the returns of stock and bond asset classes in the US and international markets.

The report also illustrates the impact of globally diversified portfolios and features quarterly topics.

Overview:

Market Summary

Index Returns

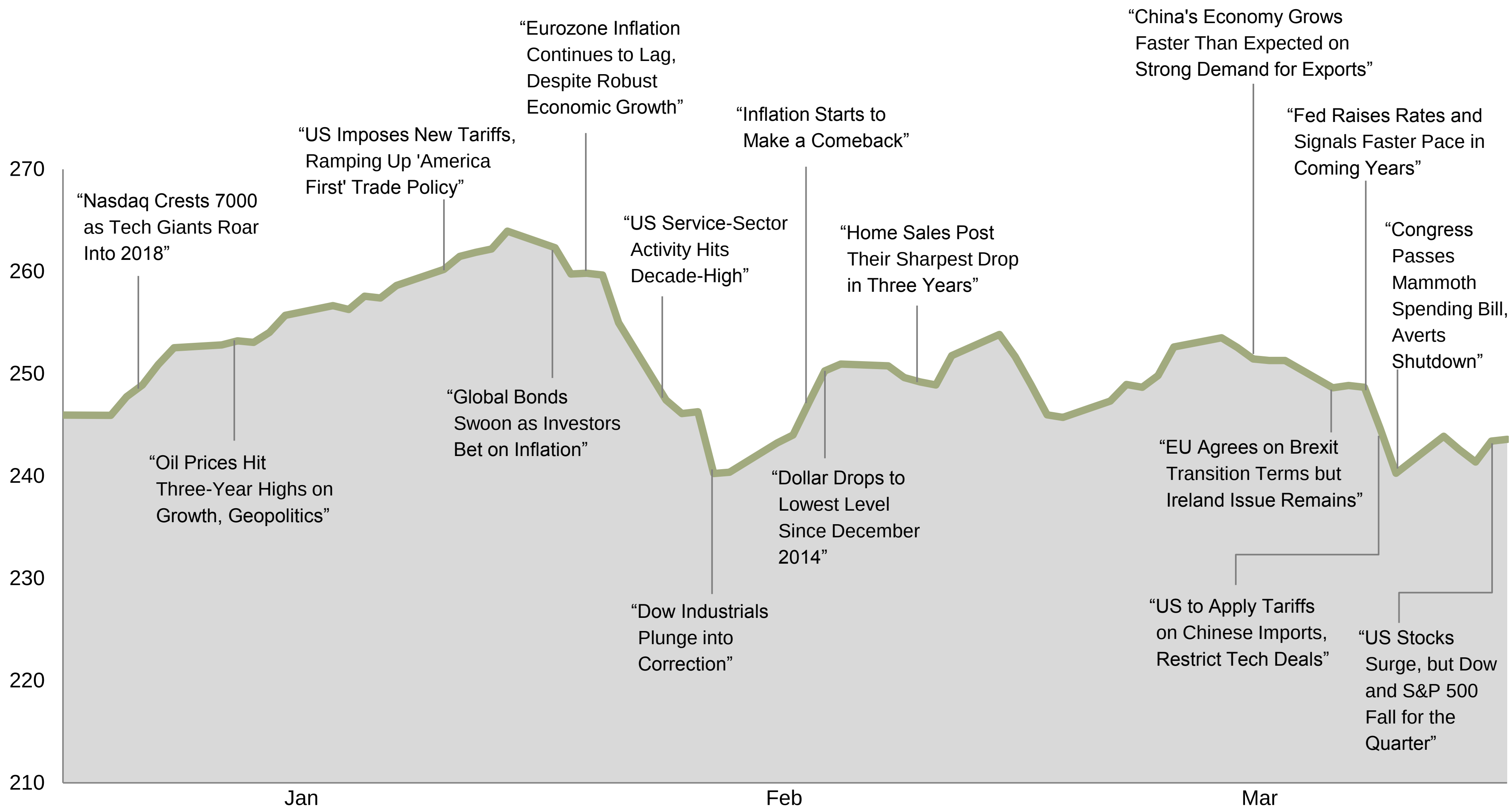
Q1 2018	US Stock Market	International Developed Stocks	Emerging Markets Stocks	Global Real Estate	US Bond Market	Global Bond Market ex US
	STOCKS				BONDS	
	-0.64%	-2.04%	1.42%	-5.79%	-1.46%	0.94%

Since Jan. 2001	US Stock Market	International Developed Stocks	Emerging Markets Stocks	Global Real Estate	US Bond Market	Global Bond Market ex US
Avg. Quarterly Return	1.9%	1.5%	3.2%	2.5%	1.1%	1.1%
Best Quarter	16.8%	25.9%	34.7%	32.3%	4.6%	4.6%
	Q2 2009	Q2 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009	Q3 2001	Q4 2008
Worst Quarter	-22.8%	-21.2%	-27.6%	-36.1%	-3.0%	-2.7%
	Q4 2008	Q4 2008	Q4 2008	Q4 2008	Q4 2016	Q2 2015

Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio.
Market segment (index representation) as follows: US Stock Market (Russell 3000 Index), International Developed Stocks (MSCI World ex USA Index [net div.]), Emerging Markets (MSCI Emerging Markets Index [net div.]), Global Real Estate (S&P Global REIT Index [net div.]), US Bond Market (Bloomberg Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index), and Global Bond ex US Market (FTSE WGBI ex USA 1−30 Years [hedged to USD]).

World Stock Market Performance

MSCI All Country World Index with selected headlines from Q1 2018



These headlines are not offered to explain market returns. Instead, they serve as a reminder that investors should view daily events from a long-term perspective and avoid making investment decisions based solely on the news.

Graph Source: MSCI ACWI Index [net div.]. MSCI data © MSCI 2018, all rights reserved.
It is not possible to invest directly in an index. Performance does not reflect the expenses associated with management of an actual portfolio. **Past performance is not a guarantee of future results**.

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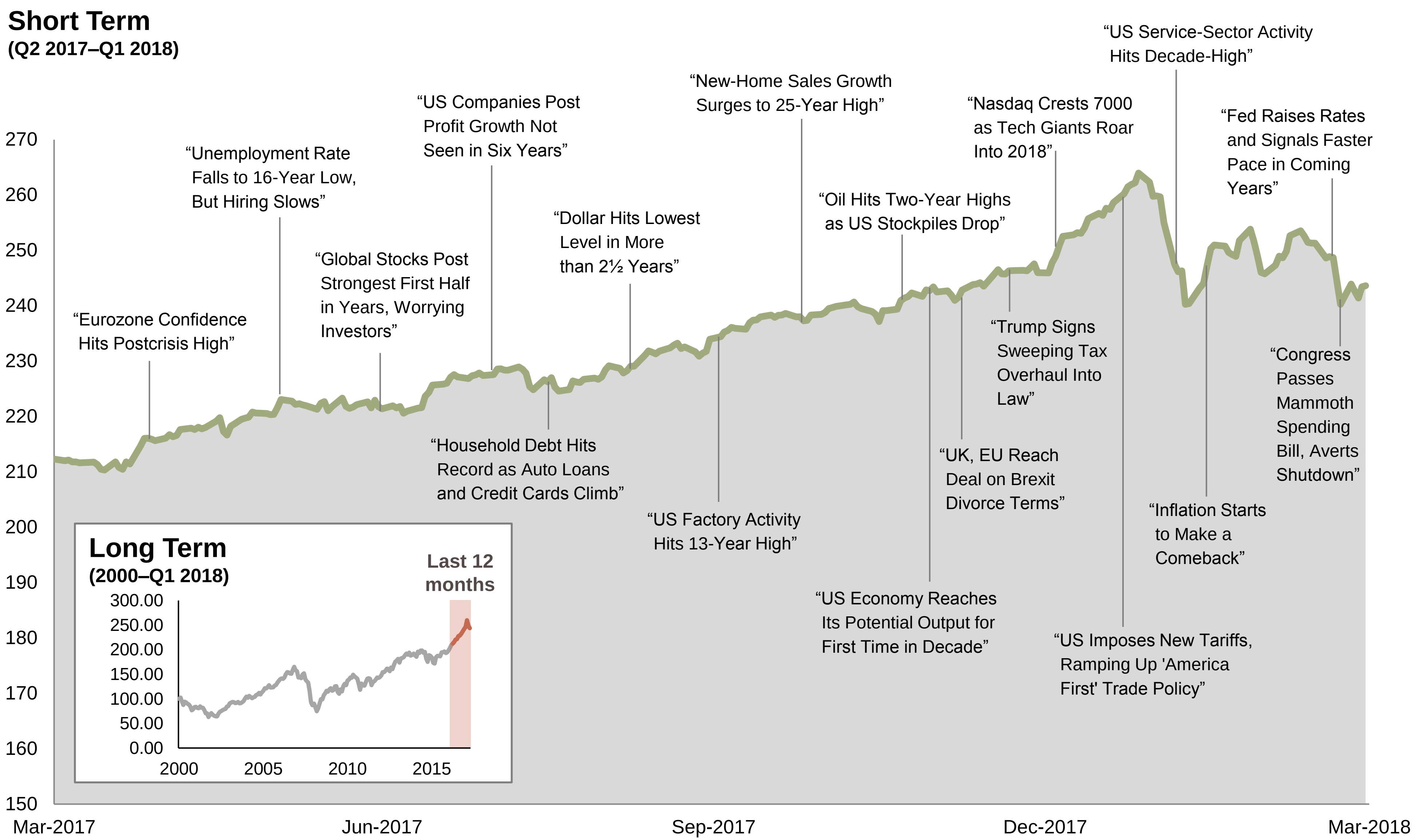
World Stock Market Performance

MSCI All Country World Index with selected headlines from past 12 months



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Graph Source: MSCI ACWI Index [net div.]. MSCI data © MSCI 2018, all rights reserved.
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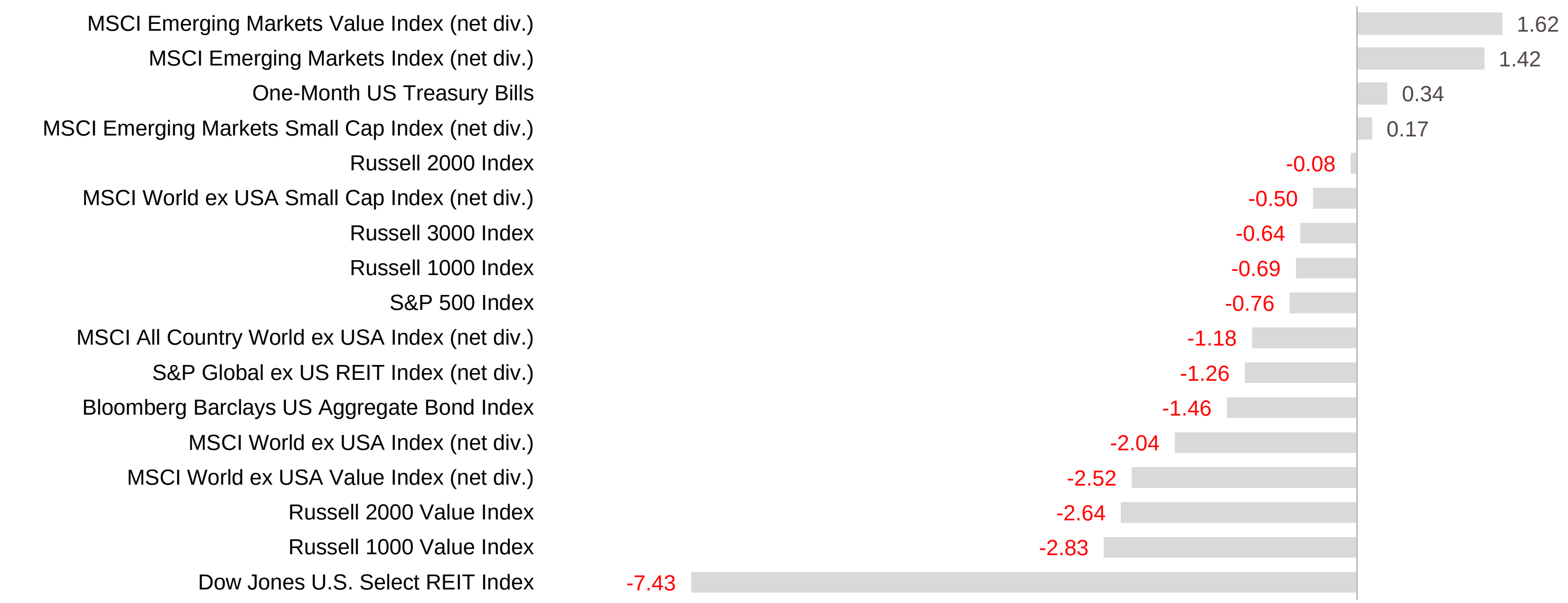
World Asset Classes

First Quarter 2018 Index Returns (%)

Looking at broad market indices, emerging markets outperformed developed markets, including the US, in the first quarter.

The value effect was positive in emerging markets but negative in developed markets, including the US. Small caps outperformed large caps in developed markets, including the US, but underperformed in emerging markets.



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US Stocks

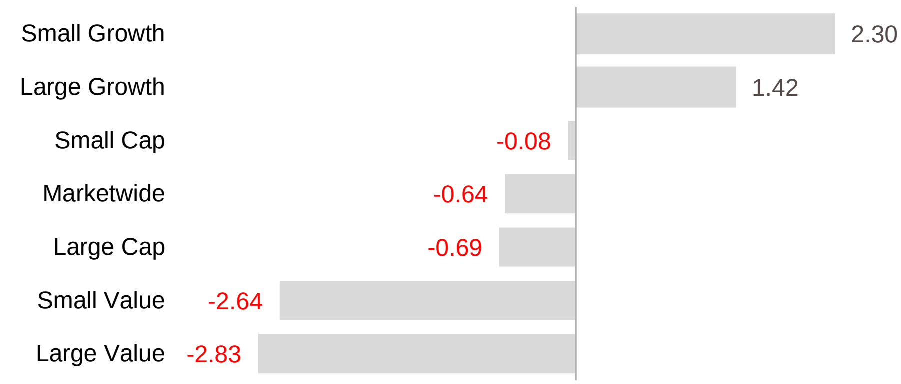
First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

The US equity market posted a negative return for the quarter.

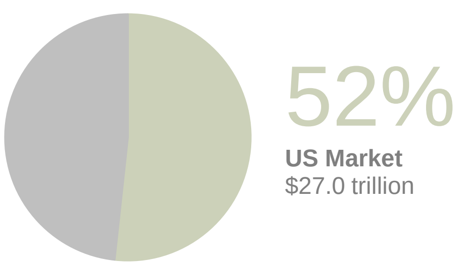
Value underperformed growth across large and small cap indices.

Small caps outperformed large caps.

Ranked Returns for the Quarter (%)



World Market Capitalization—US



Period Returns (%)

** Annualized*

Asset Class	1 Year	3 Years*	5 Years*	10 Years*
Marketwide	13.81	10.22	13.03	9.62
Large Cap	13.98	10.39	13.17	9.61
Large Value	6.95	7.88	10.78	7.78
Large Growth	21.25	12.90	15.53	11.34
Small Cap	11.79	8.39	11.47	9.84
Small Value	5.13	7.87	9.96	8.61
Small Growth	18.63	8.77	12.90	10.95

Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio. Market segment (index representation) as follows: Marketwide (Russell 3000 Index), Large Cap (Russell 1000 Index), Large Cap Value (Russell 1000 Value Index), Large Cap Growth (Russell 1000 Growth Index), Small Cap (Russell 2000 Index), Small Cap Value (Russell 2000 Value Index), and Small Cap Growth (Russell 2000 Growth Index). World Market Cap represented by Russell 3000 Index, MSCI World ex USA IMI Index, and MSCI Emerging Markets IMI Index. Russell 3000 Index is used as the proxy for the US market. Frank Russell Company is the source and owner of the trademarks, service marks, and copyrights related to the Russell Indexes.

International Developed Stocks

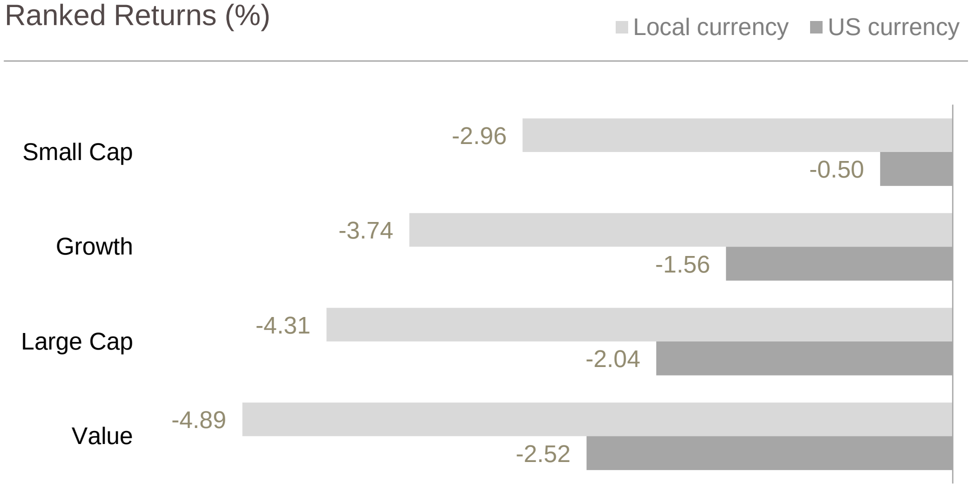
First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

In US dollar terms, developed markets outside the US underperformed the US and emerging markets during the quarter.

Value underperformed growth in non-US developed markets across large and small cap indices.

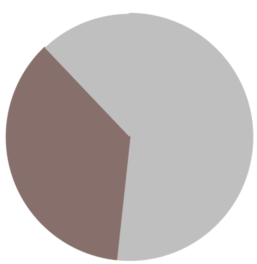
Small caps outperformed large caps in non-US developed markets.

Ranked Returns (%)



World Market Capitalization—International Developed

36%
International Developed Market
$18.9 trillion



Period Returns (%)

** Annualized*

Asset Class	1 Year	3 Years*	5 Years*	10 Years*
Large Cap	13.92	5.30	6.04	2.59
Small Cap	21.16	11.30	9.71	5.81
Value	11.66	4.46	5.44	2.08
Growth	16.28	6.06	6.58	3.03

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Market segment (index representation) as follows: Large Cap (MSCI World ex USA Index), Small Cap (MSCI World ex USA Small Cap Index), Value (MSCI World ex USA Value Index), and Growth (MSCI World ex USA Growth). All index returns are net of withholding tax on dividends. World Market Cap represented by Russell 3000 Index, MSCI World ex USA IMI Index, and MSCI Emerging Markets IMI Index. MSCI World ex USA IMI Index is used as the proxy for the International Developed market. MSCI data © MSCI 2018, all rights reserved. Frank Russell Company is the source and owner of the trademarks, service marks, and copyrights related to the Russell Indexes.

Emerging Markets Stocks

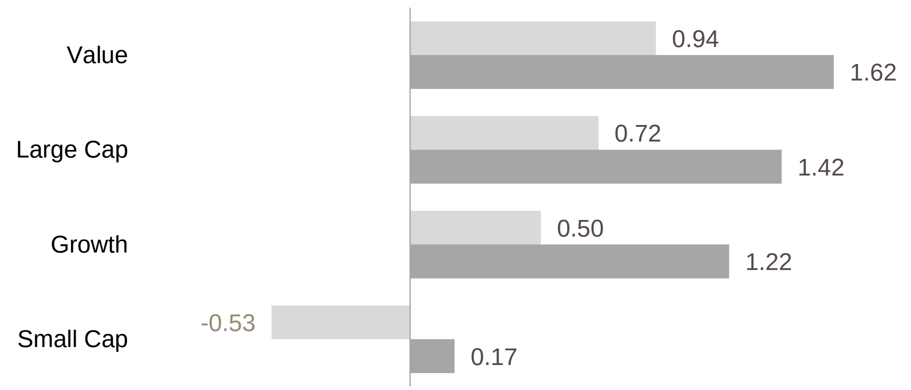
First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

In US dollar terms, emerging markets outperformed developed markets, including the US, during the quarter.

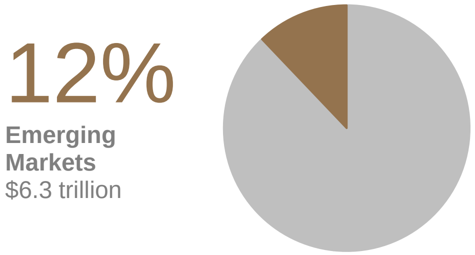
The value effect was positive in large cap indices but negative in small cap indices within emerging markets.

Small caps underperformed large caps in emerging markets.

Ranked Returns (%)



World Market Capitalization—Emerging Markets



Period Returns (%)

** Annualized*

Asset Class	1 Year	3 Years*	5 Years*	10 Years*
Large Cap	24.93	8.81	4.99	3.02
Small Cap	18.62	7.23	4.58	4.36
Value	18.14	6.65	2.57	2.07
Growth	31.73	10.89	7.30	3.87

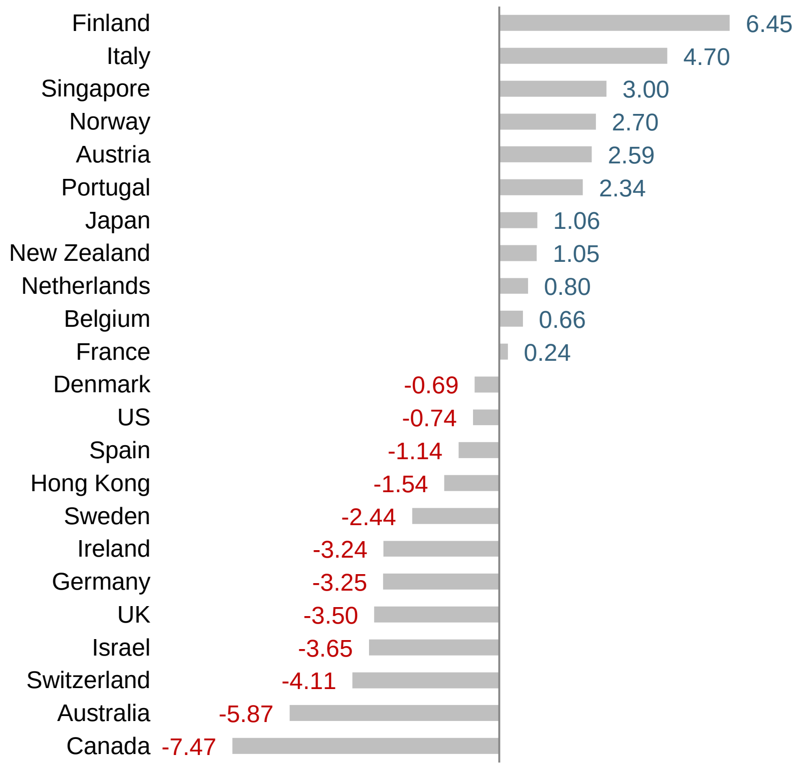
Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio. Market segment (index representation) as follows: Large Cap (MSCI Emerging Markets Index), Small Cap (MSCI Emerging Markets Small Cap Index), Value (MSCI Emerging Markets Value Index), and Growth (MSCI Emerging Markets Growth Index). All index returns are net of withholding tax on dividends. World Market Cap represented by Russell 3000 Index, MSCI World ex USA IMI Index, and MSCI Emerging Markets IMI Index. MSCI Emerging Markets IMI Index used as the proxy for the emerging market portion of the market.

Select Country Performance

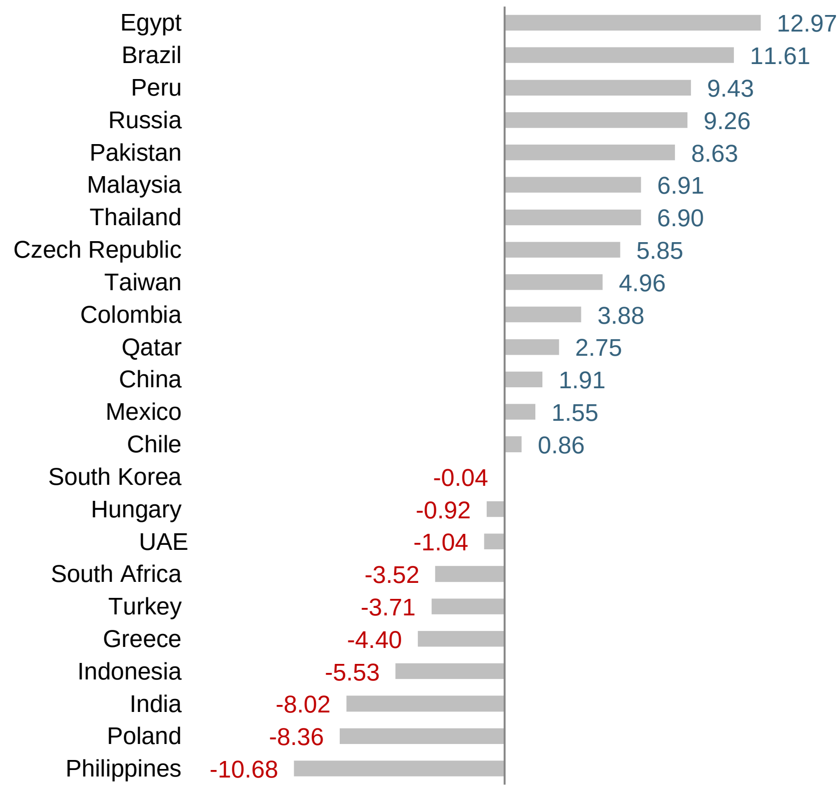
First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

In US dollar terms, Finland and Italy recorded the highest country performance in developed markets, while Canada and Australia posted the lowest returns for the quarter. In emerging markets, Egypt and Brazil posted the highest country returns, while the Philippines and Poland had the lowest performance.

Ranked Developed Markets Returns (%)



Ranked Emerging Markets Returns (%)



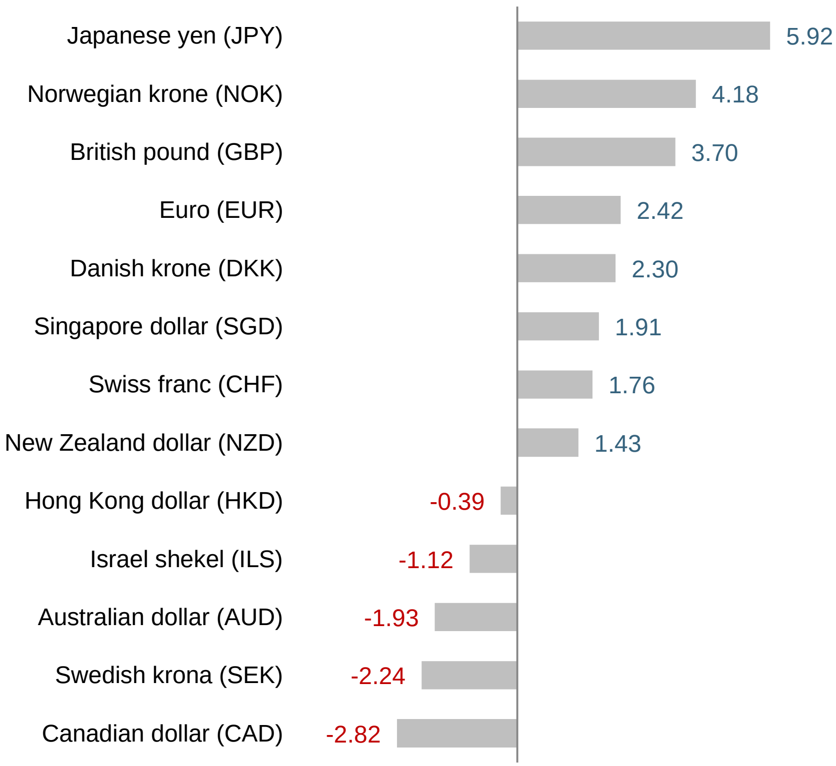
Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio. Country performance based on respective indices in the MSCI World ex US IMI Index (for developed markets), MSCI USA IMI Index (for US), and MSCI Emerging Markets IMI Index. All returns in USD and net of withholding tax on dividends. MSCI data © MSCI 2018, all rights reserved. UAE and Qatar have been reclassified as emerging markets by MSCI, effective May 2014.

Select Currency Performance vs. US Dollar

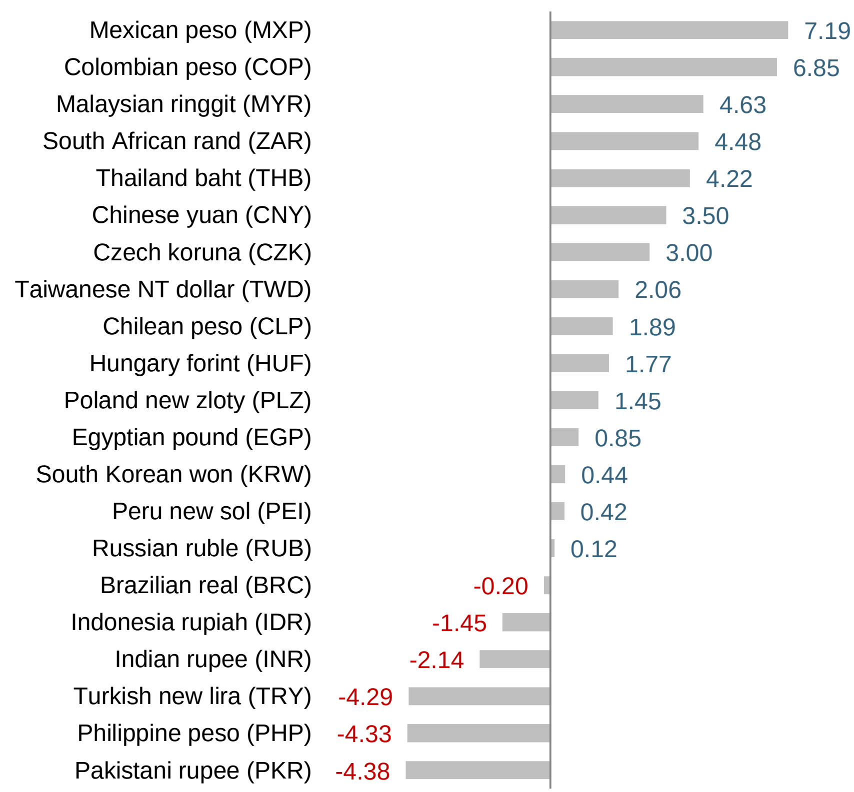
First Quarter 2018

Currencies returns were mixed for the quarter. In developed markets, the Japanese yen appreciated by over 5.5% but the Canadian dollar depreciated approximately 3%. In emerging markets, the Mexican peso appreciated by over 7% but the Pakistani rupee, Philippine peso, and Turkish new lira all depreciated more than 4%.

Ranked Developed Markets (%)



Ranked Emerging Markets (%)



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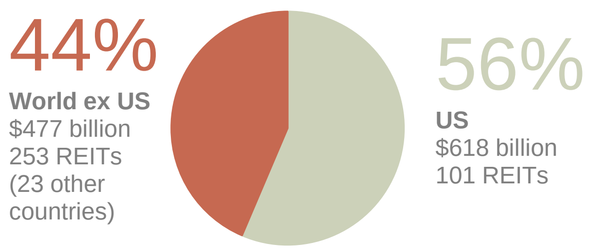
Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)

First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

Non-US real estate investment trusts outperformed US REITs in the first quarter.

Ranked Returns (%)

Total Value of REIT Stocks



Period Returns (%)

** Annualized*

Asset Class	1 Year	3 Years*	5 Years*	10 Years*
Dow Jones US Select REIT Index	-3.68	0.74	5.97	6.02
S&P Global ex US REIT Index (net div.)	10.20	3.59	3.73	2.51

Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio.
Number of REIT stocks and total value based on the two indices. All index returns are net of withholding tax on dividends. Total value of REIT stocks represented by Dow Jones US Select REIT Index and the S&P Global ex US REIT Index. Dow Jones US Select REIT Index used as proxy for the US market, and S&P Global ex US REIT Index used as proxy for the World ex US market.

Commodities

First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

The Bloomberg Commodity Index Total Return declined 0.40% during the first quarter.

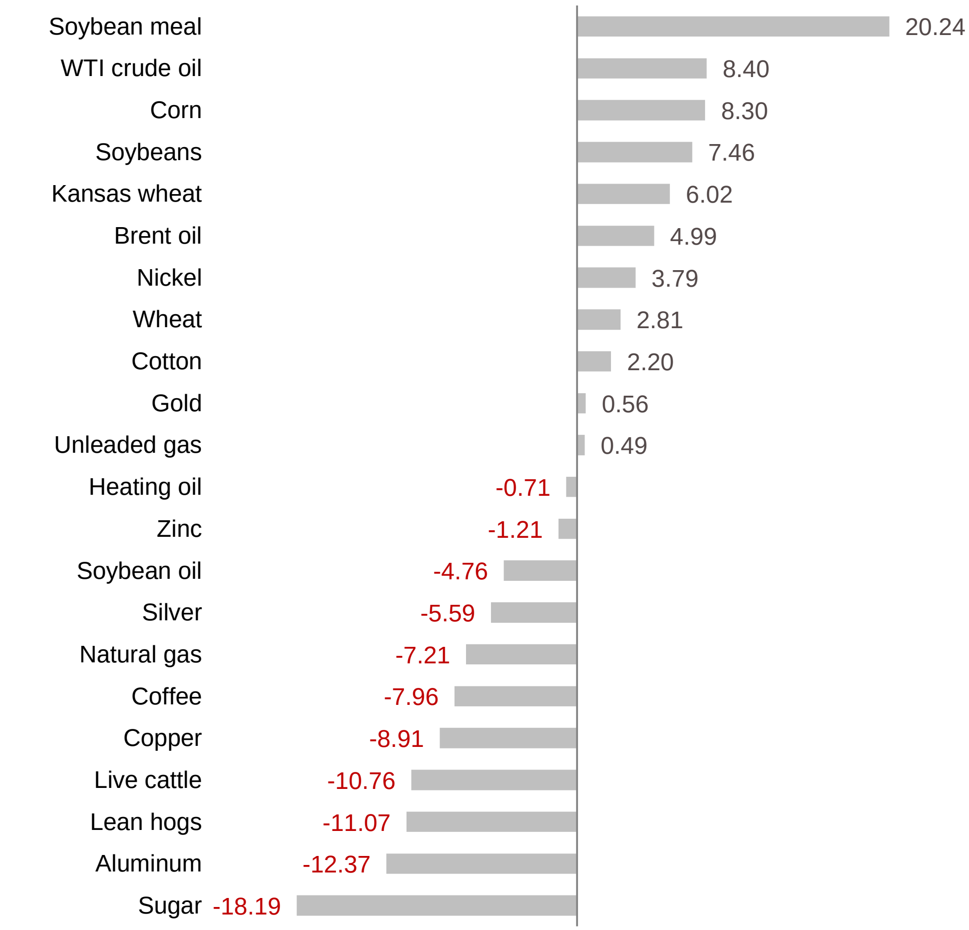
The grains complex led performance, with soybean meal returning 20.24% and corn gaining 8.30%. Energy also advanced, with WTI crude oil returning 8.40% and Brent oil advancing 4.99%.

Softs was the worst-performing complex, with sugar and coffee declining by 18.19% and 7.96%, respectively.

Period Returns (%) ** Annualized*

Asset Class	1 Year	3 Years*	5 Years*	10 Years*
Commodities	3.71	-3.21	-8.32	-7.71

Ranked Returns for Individual Commodities (%)



Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Index is not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio.
Commodities returns represent the return of the Bloomberg Commodity Total Return Index. Individual Commodities are sub-index values of the Bloomberg Commodity Total Return Index. Data provided by Bloomberg.

Fixed Income

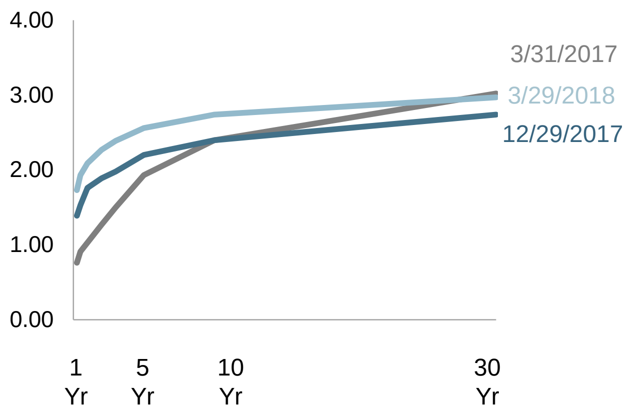
First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

Interest rates increased in the US during the first quarter. The yield on the 5-year Treasury note rose 36 basis points (bps), ending at 2.56%. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note increased 34 bps to 2.74%. The 30-year Treasury bond yield rose 23 bps to finish at 2.97%.

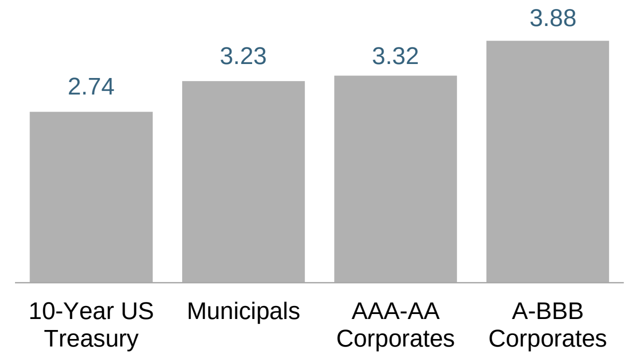
On the short end of the yield curve, the 1-month Treasury bill yield increased 35 bps to 1.63%, while the 1-year Treasury bill yield rose 33 bps to 2.09%. The 2-year Treasury note finished at 2.27% after a yield increase of 38 bps.

In terms of total return, short-term corporate bonds dipped 0.38% and intermediate corporates fell 1.50%. Short-term municipal bonds advanced 0.10%, while intermediate munis declined 1.29%. Revenue bonds performed in-line with general obligation bonds, declining 1.19% and 1.20%, respectively.

US Treasury Yield Curve (%)



Bond Yields across Issuers (%)



Period Returns (%)

** Annualized*

Asset Class	1 Year	3 Years*	5 Years*	10 Years*
Bloomberg Barclays Municipal Bond Index	2.66	2.25	2.73	4.40
Bloomberg Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index	1.20	1.20	1.82	3.63
Bloomberg Barclays US Government Bond Index Long	3.53	0.45	3.28	5.75
Bloomberg Barclays US High Yield Corporate Bond Index	3.78	5.17	4.99	8.27
Bloomberg Barclays US TIPS Index	0.92	1.30	0.05	2.93
FTSE World Government Bond Index 1-5 Years	5.77	2.36	-0.37	0.57
FTSE World Government Bond Index 1-5 Years (hedged to USD)	1.01	1.06	1.21	1.93
ICE BofAML 1-Year US Treasury Note Index	0.66	0.54	0.42	0.71
ICE BofAML 3-Month US Treasury Bill Index	1.11	0.53	0.34	0.34

One basis point equals 0.01%. **Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio.** Yield curve data from Federal Reserve. State and local bonds are from the S&P National AMT-Free Municipal Bond Index. AAA-AA Corporates represent the Bank of America Merrill Lynch US Corporates, AA-AAA rated. A-BBB Corporates represent the Bank of America Merrill Lynch US Corporates, BBB-A rated. Bloomberg Barclays data provided by Bloomberg. US long-term bonds, bills, inflation, and fixed income factor data © Stocks, Bonds, Bills, and Inflation (SBBI) Yearbook™, Ibbotson Associates, Chicago (annually updated work by Roger G. Ibbotson and Rex A. Sinquefield). FTSE fixed income indices © 2018 FTSE Fixed Income LLC, all rights reserved. ICE BofAML index data © 2018 ICE Data Indices, LLC.

Impact of Diversification

First Quarter 2018 Index Returns

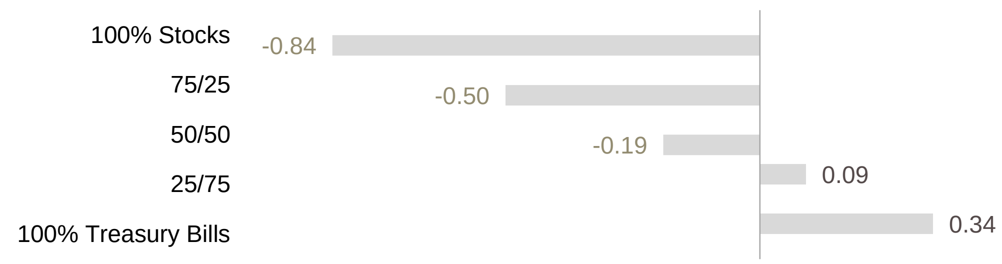
These portfolios illustrate the performance of different global stock/bond mixes. Mixes with larger allocations to stocks are considered riskier but have higher expected returns over time.

Period Returns (%)

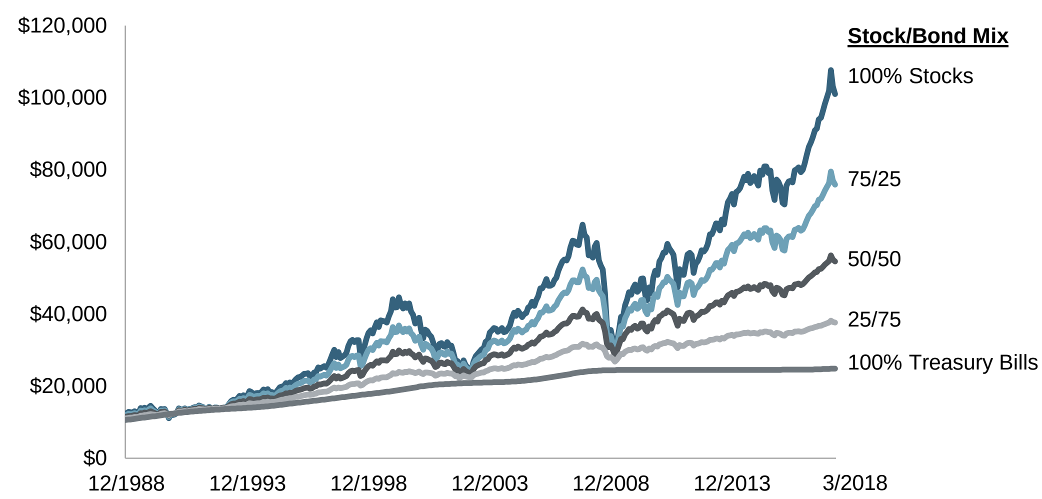
** Annualized*

Asset Class	1 Year	3 Years*	5 Years*	10 Years*	10-Year STDEV[1]
100% Stocks	15.44	8.71	9.79	6.15	16.72
75/25	11.74	6.70	7.44	4.94	12.54
50/50	8.11	4.65	5.07	3.55	8.35
25/75	4.54	2.57	2.68	1.99	4.16
100% Treasury Bills	1.03	0.45	0.28	0.28	0.14

Ranked Returns (%)



Growth of Wealth: The Relationship between Risk and Return



1. STDEV (standard deviation) is a measure of the variation or dispersion of a set of data points. Standard deviations are often used to quantify the historical return volatility of a security or portfolio.

Diversification does not eliminate the risk of market loss. **Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Indices are not available for direct investment. Index performance does not reflect expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio**. Asset allocations and the hypothetical index portfolio returns are for illustrative purposes only and do not represent actual performance. Global Stocks represented by MSCI All Country World Index (gross div.) and Treasury Bills represented by US One-Month Treasury Bills. Globally diversified allocations rebalanced monthly, no withdrawals. Data © MSCI 2018, all rights reserved. Treasury bills © Stocks, Bonds, Bills, and Inflation Yearbook™, Ibbotson Associates, Chicago (annually updated work by Roger G. Ibbotson and Rex A. Sinquefield).

Recent Market Volatility

First Quarter 2018

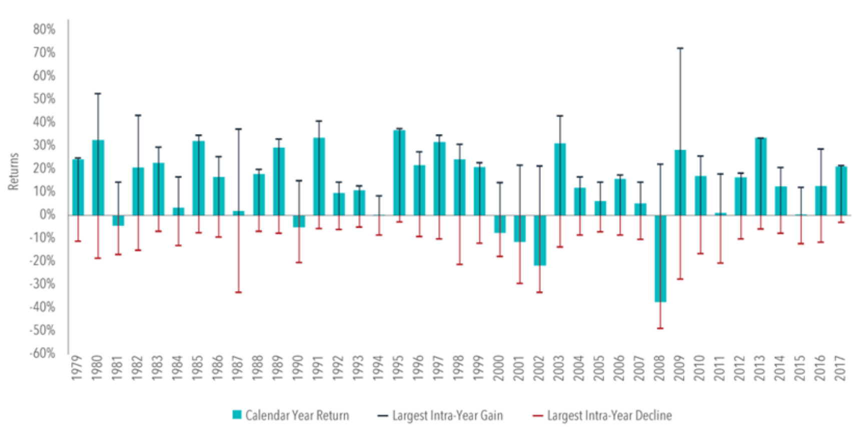
After a period of relative calm in the markets, in recent days the increase in volatility in the stock market has resulted in renewed anxiety for many investors.

From February 1–5, the US market (as measured by the Russell 3000 Index) fell almost 6%, resulting in many investors wondering what the future holds and if they should make changes to their portfolios. While it may be difficult to remain calm during a substantial market decline, it is important to remember that volatility is a normal part of investing. Additionally, for long-term investors, reacting emotionally to volatile markets may be more detrimental to portfolio performance than the drawdown itself.

INTRA-YEAR DECLINES

Exhibit 1 shows calendar year returns for the US stock market since 1979, as well as the largest intra-year declines that occurred during a given year. During this period, the average intra-year decline was about 14%. About half of the years observed had declines of more than 10%, and around a third had declines of more than 15%. Despite substantial intra-year drops, calendar year returns were positive in 32 years out of the 37 examined. This goes to show just how common market declines are and how difficult it is to say whether a large intra-year decline will result in negative returns over the entire year.

Exhibit 1. **US Market Intra-Year Gains and Declines vs. Calendar Year Returns, 1979–2017**



REACTING IMPACTS PERFORMANCE

If one was to try and time the market in order to avoid the potential losses associated with periods of increased volatility, would this help or hinder long-term performance? If current market prices aggregate the information and expectations of market participants, stock mispricing cannot be systematically exploited through market timing. In other words, it is unlikely that investors can successfully time the market, and if they do manage it, it may be a result of luck rather than skill. Further complicating the prospect of market timing being additive to portfolio performance is the fact that a substantial proportion of the total return of stocks over long periods comes from just a handful of days. Since investors are unlikely to be able to identify in advance which days will have strong returns and which will not, the prudent course is likely to remain invested during periods of volatility rather than jump in and out of stocks. Otherwise, an investor runs the risk of being on the sidelines on days when returns happen to be strongly positive.

Exhibit 2 helps illustrate this point. It shows the annualized compound return of the S&P 500 Index going back to 1990 and illustrates the impact of missing out on just a few days of strong returns. The bars represent the hypothetical growth of $1,000 over the period and show what happened if you missed the best single day during the period and what happened if you missed a handful of the best single days. The data shows that being on the sidelines for only a few of the best single days in the market would have resulted in substantially lower returns than the total period had to offer.

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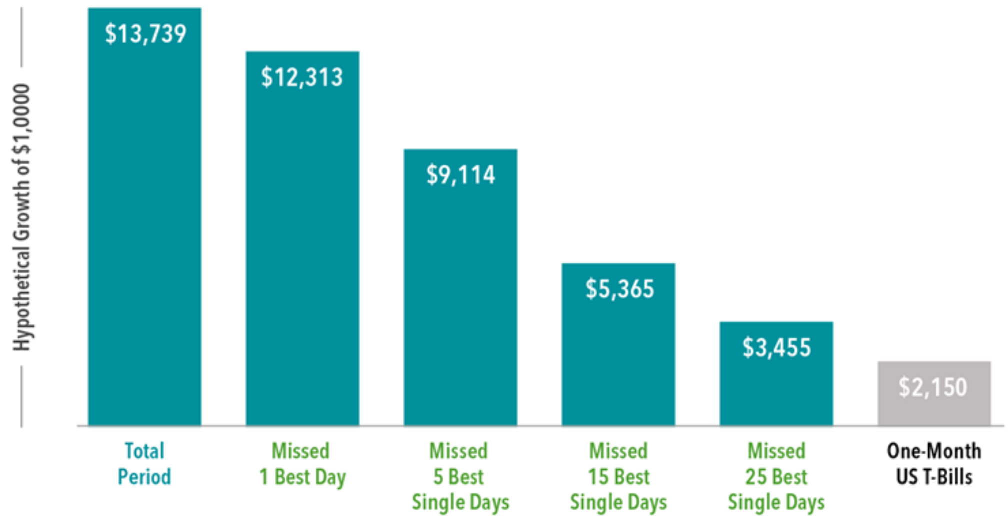
Recent Market Volatility

First Quarter 2018

Exhibit 2. **Performance of the S&P 500 Index, 1990–2017**



	Total Period	Missed 1 Best Day	Missed 5 Best Single Days	Missed 15 Best Single Days	Missed 25 Best Single Days	One-Month US T-Bills
Annualized Compound Return	9.81%	9.38%	8.21%	6.18%	4.53%	2.77%

In US dollars. For illustrative purposes. The missed best day(s) examples assume that the hypothetical portfolio fully divested its holdings at the end of the day before the missed best day(s), held cash for the missed best day(s), and reinvested the entire portfolio in the S&P 500 at the end of the missed best day(s). Annualized returns for the missed best day(s) were calculated by substituting actual returns for the missed best day(s) with zero. S&P data © 2018 S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, a division of S&P Global. All rights reserved. One-Month US T- Bills is the IA SBBI US 30 Day TBill TR USD, provided by Ibbotson Associates via Morningstar Direct. Data is calculated off rounded daily index values.

CONCLUSION

While market volatility can be nerve-racking for investors, reacting emotionally and changing long-term investment strategies in response to short-term declines could prove more harmful than helpful. By adhering to a well-thought-out investment plan, ideally agreed upon in advance of periods of volatility, investors may be better able to remain calm during periods of short-term uncertainty

Source: Dimensional Fund Advisors LP.
Indices are not available for direct investment. Their performance does not reflect the expenses associated with the management of an actual portfolio. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Diversification does not eliminate the risk of market loss.
There is no guarantee investment strategies will be successful. Investing involves risks including possible loss of principal. Investors should talk to their financial advisor prior to making any investment decision. There is always the risk that an investor may lose money. A long-term investment approach cannot guarantee a profit.
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Sailing with the Tides

First Quarter 2018

Embarking on a financial plan is like sailing around the world. The voyage won't always go to plan, and there'll be rough seas. But the odds of reaching your destination increase greatly if you are prepared, flexible, patient, and well-advised.

A mistake many inexperienced sailors make is not having a plan at all. They embark without a clear sense of their destination. And once they do decide, they often find themselves lost at sea in the wrong boat with inadequate provisions.

Likewise, in planning an investment journey, you need to decide on your goal. A first step might be to consider whether the goal is realistic and achievable. For instance, while you may long to retire in the south of France, you may not be prepared to sacrifice your needs today to satisfy that distant desire.

Once you are set on a realistic destination, you need to ensure you have the right portfolio to get you there. Have you planned for multiple contingencies? What degree of "bad weather" can your plan withstand along the way?

Key to a successful voyage is a good navigator. A trusted advisor is like that, regularly taking coordinates and making adjustments, if necessary. If your circumstances change, the advisor may suggest you replot your course.

As with the weather at sea, markets can be unpredictable. A sudden squall can whip up waves of volatility, tides can shift, and strong currents can threaten to blow you off course. Like a seasoned sailor, an experienced advisor will work with the conditions.

Once the storm passes, you can pick up speed again. Just as a sturdy vessel will help you withstand most conditions at sea, a well-diversified portfolio can act as a bulwark against the sometimes tempestuous conditions in markets.

Circumnavigating the globe is not exciting every day. Patience is required with local customs and paperwork as you pull into different ports. Likewise, a lack of attention to costs and taxes is the enemy of many a long-term financial plan.

Distractions can also send investors, like sailors, off course. In the face of "hot" investment trends, it takes discipline not to veer from your chosen plan. Like the sirens of Greek mythology, media pundits can also be diverting, tempting you to change tack and act on news that is already priced in to markets.

A lack of flexibility is another impediment to a successful investment journey. If it doesn't look as though you'll make your destination in time, you may have to extend your voyage, take a different route to get there, or even moderate your goal.

The important point is that you become comfortable with the idea that uncertainty is inherent to the investment journey, just as it is with any sea voyage. That is why preparation and planning are so critical. While you can't control every outcome, you can be prepared for the range of possibilities and understand that you have clear choices if things don't go according to plan.

If you can't live with the volatility, you can change your plan. If the goal looks unachievable, you can lower your sights. If it doesn't look as if you'll arrive on time, you can extend your journey.

Of course, not everyone's journey is the same. Neither is everyone's destination. We take different routes to different places, and we meet a range of challenges and opportunities along the way.

But for all of us, it's critical that we are prepared for our journeys in the right vessel, keep our destinations in mind, stick with the plans, and have a trusted navigator to chart our courses and keep us on target.