

March 10, 2021

Accelerating Recovery

- Record Canadian GDP growth and strongest US GDP growth since 1984 are expected in 2021.
- Strong momentum observed across a range of variables early in 2021 despite the spike in the number of new COVID-19 cases observed internationally.
- Even with the high likelihood of another wave in the pandemic, risks to the outlook seem tilted to the upside.
- The Federal Reserve and Bank of Canada may need to raise interest rates more rapidly than in their most recent guidance of 2024 in the US and 2023 in Canada.

Another month, another upward revision to our forecasts. While COVID-affected sectors generally continue to struggle given restrictions on activity, most other sectors are showing considerable vigour. The global economy is on track to record its most rapid pace of expansion in at least 40 years, thanks in large part to US fiscal policy. This optimism and the upside risks to the outlook remain in place, despite our anticipation of at least one more wave of COVID-19 arriving in the coming weeks.

The expected vigour in the United States is nothing short of astounding. A rebound from the pandemic was always expected to lead to solid growth this year, but the stimulus cheques paid early in January and the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan will turbo-charge the recovery. In this update, we are revising our forecasted growth in the US to 6.3% in 2021 and 4.4% in 2022. This would be the strongest growth, by far, since 1984 and would see US economic activity in 2022 exceed where it would have been had pre-COVID trends been maintained. This is the only country in the world where this is expected. Moreover, risks are tilted to the upside. In line with the past experience with transfers, we assume very low multipliers on planned fiscal expenditures given the fact that they are mostly transfers to individuals. That may prove overly pessimistic given the surge in retail sales seen in January, shortly after the \$600 cheques were mailed out. Moreover, President Biden has made it clear he wishes to launch an infrastructure program later in the year which could, at the margin, further boost growth this year and next.

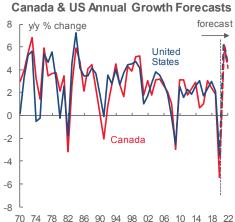
The speed of the recovery, if eventually confirmed by the data, continues to suggest that the Federal Reserve may need to tighten interest rates sooner than publicly communicated. While we do not believe inflation will rise in an uncontrolled manner, we anticipate core PCE will rise to 2.4% y/y by the end of 2022. The steepening of the yield curve is roughly consistent with this view at present, though we expect additional but more gradual steepening in the quarters to come. The move observed thus far is, in our view, entirely consistent with the improvement in the outlook and does not represent a headwind to growth.

Canada stands to benefit from the US rebound directly, but also indirectly through the increase in financial assets and commodity prices seen in recent months.

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Chart 1



70 74 78 82 86 90 94 98 02 06 10 14 18 22 Sources: Scotiabank Economics, BEA, Statistics Canada.



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Relative to our earlier expectations, the rise in commodity prices is quite spectacular. We expect a gradual pullback from current levels as supply adjusts to the strength of demand across almost the full range of commodities. Even so, commodity prices would be highly supportive to the Canadian outlook and should, on average, be well above our previous forecasts.

Adding to these external factors, we are seeing further signs of resilience in retail sales in our internal tracking of transactions which suggests to us that consumption will advance sharply this year (March 4th issue is available here). This will of course be supported by strong job growth, wealth effects from housing and equity markets, government support programs, and strong household balance sheets. Similarly, housing construction is off to a strong start this year and January building permits are pointing to a potentially record increase in residential investment this year. Housing-related activity should also remain strong given low mortgage rates and the shortage of supply relative to demand as already seen so far this quarter. One risk to the outlook on this front: record low levels of homes for sale could prove to be a headwind to sales in the weeks and months to come.

We assume a third wave of the virus will hit Canada by early April. There are likely to be some additional containment measures that result from that. Given the experience with the second wave and the resilience of a range of economic variables to strict containment measures, we assume this third wave would have only a modest impact on second quarter GDP, shaving only about a percentage point from annualized growth. This would lead to quarterly GDP growth of 5.0% in 21Q2. This may well prove to be an overly optimistic judgement, but we are learning by doing: we had originally forecast a decline of 2.1% in 21Q1 and our tracking now suggests a lift of 4.5% q/q given the strength seen in incoming data. We now forecast growth of 6.2% this year and 4.0% next year.

We expect that progress on the vaccination front will allow a broader lifting of containment measures in the second half of the year. Should that occur, the recovery baton will pass to the sectors currently most affected by COVID. A surge in activity in the tourism, arts and entertainment, and food and accommodation sectors is likely. There is already clear evidence of pent-up demand for these services.

As is the case in the US, we don't think the Bank of Canada will wait until 2023 to raise interest rates. As currently measured, we think the output gap will be closed by the end of this year and that Canada will recover output lost to the pandemic by the third quarter. Core measures of inflation should gradually rise to the Bank of Canada's 2 per cent target by the end of the year and peak at 2.3% by the end of 2022 if they raise interest rates in the second half of 2022.

Though we believe upside risks to the forecast dominate, we cannot exclude the possibility that mutations of the virus throw the recovery off track, nor can we discount challenges associated with vaccine rollouts in Canada. These are material downside risks to our view. Likewise, our call that a third wave would have limited economic effects could well be overly optimistic. Looking further ahead to 2023 or 2024, there is a risk that the US overheats by then, creating imbalances that may be problematic in these outer years. That may well be a good problem to have given the experience of the last year.



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International	2010-19	2019	2020e	2021f	2022f	2010–19	2019	2020	2021f	2022				
	Real GDP						Consumer Prices							
		(annua	ıl % chan	ge)		(y/y % change, year-end)								
World (based on purchasing power parity)	3.7	2.9	-3.6	5.8	4.4									
Canada	2.2	1.9	-5.4	6.2	4.0	1.7	2.1	0.8	2.3	2.				
United States	2.3	2.2	-3.5	6.3	4.4	1.7	2.0	1.2	2.3	2.				
Mexico	2.7	0.0	-8.3	4.9	2.1	4.0	2.8	3.2	4.3	3.				
United Kingdom	1.8	1.4	-9.9	5.1	4.2	2.1	1.3	0.6	1.3	1.				
Eurozone	1.4	1.3	-6.8	4.2	3.9	1.3	1.3	-0.3	1.0	1.				
Germany	1.9	0.6	-5.3	3.9	3.5	1.3	1.5	-0.3	1.3	1.				
France	1.4	1.5	-8.2	6.0	3.7	1.2	1.5	0.0	1.0	1.				
China	7.7	6.0	2.3	8.3	5.9	2.7	4.5	0.2	2.0	2.				
India	7.0	4.7	-7.1	8.5	7.2	6.8	7.4	4.6	4.2	5.				
Japan	1.3	0.3	-4.9	3.0	1.1	0.6	8.0	-1.2	8.0	1.				
South Korea	3.3	2.0	-1.0	3.0	2.8	1.7	0.7	0.5	1.8	2.				
Australia	2.6	1.9	-2.4	3.5	2.2	2.1	1.8	0.9	1.6	2.				
Thailand	3.6	2.3	-6.1	4.3	3.8	1.5	0.9	-0.3	8.0	1.				
Brazil	1.5	1.4	-4.1	4.6	3.0	5.9	4.3	4.5	5.1	4.				
Colombia	3.7	3.3	-6.8	5.0	4.0	3.9	3.8	1.6	2.8	3.				
Peru	4.5	2.2	-11.1	8.7	4.0	2.9	1.9	2.0	2.6	2.				
Chile	3.3	1.1	-6.0	6.0	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.				
Argentina	1.4	-2.1	-10.4	4.1	3.4	26.1	53.8	36.1	42.9	36.				
Commodities														
		(annu	al averag	e)										
WTI Oil (USD/bbl)	74	57	39	61	65									
Brent Oil (USD/bbl)	82	64	43	64	68									
WCS - WTI Discount (USD/bbl)	-18	-14	-12	-14	-15									
Nymex Natural Gas (USD/mmbtu)	3.39	2.53	2.02	2.80	2.65									
Copper (USD/lb)	3.10	2.73	2.80	3.40	3.50									
Zinc (USD/lb)	1.02	1.16	1.03	1.20	1.15									
Nickel (USD/lb)	7.00	6.31	6.25	7.50	7.25									
Iron Ore (USD/tonne)	101	93	109	115	85									
Metallurgical Coal (USD/tonne)	179	185	127	125	140									
Gold, (USD/oz)	1,342	1,393	1,771	1,850	1,850									
Silver, (USD/oz)	21.64	16.21	20.48	22.00	22.00									



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North America	2010-19	2019	2020	2021f	2022f	2010-19	2019	2020	2021f	2022		
			Canada				Uni	ted State	s			
	(an	nual % ch	nange, unl	ess noted)	(annual % change, unless noted)						
Real GDP	2.2	1.9	-5.4	6.2	4.0	2.3	2.2	-3.5	6.3	4.4		
Consumer spending	2.5	1.7	-6.1	4.7	3.0	2.4	2.4	-3.9	6.6	4.5		
Residential investment	2.5	-0.2	3.8	19.5	4.7	4.4	-1.7	6.0	14.5	3.7		
Business investment*	2.6	0.5	-11.5	3.7	3.9	5.0	2.9	-4.0	8.1	5.		
Government	1.2	1.7	-0.3	2.9	2.4	0.0	2.3	1.1	1.3	2.		
Exports	3.4	1.3	-9.8	11.8	6.8	3.8	-0.1	-12.9	14.6	7.3		
Imports	3.7	0.4	-11.3	10.5	4.2	4.5	1.1	-9.7	14.8	5.6		
Inventories, contribution to annual GDP growth	0.1	0.2	-1.6	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.0	-0.7	0.6	0.0		
Nominal GDP	4.0	3.6	-4.6	9.7	6.9	4.0	4.0	-2.3	8.5	7.3		
GDP deflator	1.7	1.7	0.8	3.2	2.7	1.7	1.8	1.2	2.1	2.8		
Consumer price index (CPI)	1.7	1.9	0.7	1.7	2.3	1.8	1.8	1.3	2.0	2.		
Core inflation rate**	2.7	1.9	1.7	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.9	2.		
Pre-tax corporate profits	6.3	0.6	-6.1	14.4	5.5	5.2	0.3	-5.1	12.7	4.		
Employment	1.3	2.2	-5.1	4.2	3.6	1.5	1.3	-5.7	1.8	3.5		
Unemployment rate (%)	6.9	5.7	9.6	8.0	5.7	6.2	3.7	8.1	5.5	3.0		
Current account balance (CAD, USD bn)	-57.0	-47.4	-42.7	-7.2	6.2	-411	-480	-621	-659	-650		
Merchandise trade balance (CAD, USD bn)	-13.1	-15.4	-36.7	-15.3	2.3	-764	-864	-900	-1004	-1048		
Federal budget balance (FY, CAD, USD bn) ***	-20.9	-39.4	-381.6	-141.2	-50.7	-830	-984	-3,132	-3,459	-1,44		
percent of GDP	-1.2	-1.8	-17.3	-5.8	-2.0	-4.8	-4.6	-15.0	-15.2	-6.0		
Housing starts (000s, mn)	201	209	219	222	214	0.99	1.30	1.40	1.56	1.50		
Motor vehicle sales (000s, mn)	1,819	1,916	1,569	1,790	1,920	15.7	16.9	14.4	16.7	17.4		
Industrial production	2.4	-0.2	-8.5	5.9	4.0	2.1	0.9	-6.6	6.6	3.		
			Mexico									
		(annu	al % chan	ge)								
Real GDP	2.7	0.0	-8.3	4.9	2.1							
Consumer price index (year-end)	4.0	2.8	3.2	4.3	3.6							
Current account balance (USD bn)	-19.8	-4.4	22.8	-20.7	-23.9							
Merchandise trade balance (USD bn)	-5.6	5.4	30.2	-9.8	-19.8							

Sources: Scotiabank Economics, Statistics Canada, CMHC, BEA, BLS, Bloomberg. *For Canada it includes capital expenditures by businesses and non-profit institutions ** US: core PCE deflator; Canada: average of 3 core measures published by the BoC. *** In order to align with US reporting, as of the August 2020 issue of Scotiabank's Forecast Tables, Canadian Federal and Provincial Budget Balances for FY2020/21 are noted in calendar year 2020, FY2021/22 in calendar year 2021.

Quarterly Forecasts	2019	2020					2021		2022				
Canada	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1f	Q2f	Q3f	Q4f	Q1f	Q2f	Q3f	Q4f
Real GDP (q/q ann. % change)	0.4	-7.5	-38.5	40.6	9.6	4.5	5.0	7.1	4.7	4.1	2.6	2.5	2.3
Real GDP (y/y % change)	1.7	-0.3	-12.7	-5.3	-3.2	-0.2	14.1	6.6	5.3	5.2	4.6	3.5	2.9
Consumer prices (y/y % change)	2.1	1.8	0.0	0.3	0.8	1.1	1.6	1.9	2.3	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.4
Avg. of new core CPIs (y/y % change)	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.3
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.7	6.4	13.1	10.1	8.8	9.2	8.6	7.6	6.8	6.1	5.8	5.6	5.5
United States													
Real GDP (q/q ann. % change)	2.4	-5.0	-31.4	33.4	4.1	4.5	7.8	9.9	6.9	3.5	1.7	1.4	1.3
Real GDP (y/y % change)	2.3	0.3	-9.0	-2.8	-2.4	-0.1	11.8	6.6	7.3	7.0	5.4	3.3	1.9
Consumer prices (y/y % change)	2.0	2.1	0.4	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.9	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7
Total PCE deflator (y/y % change)	1.5	1.7	0.6	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.7	2.0	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5
Core PCE deflator (y/y % change)	1.6	1.8	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.6	3.8	13.1	8.8	6.8	6.2	5.8	5.3	4.8	4.2	3.7	3.4	3.2
Sources: Scotiabank Economics, Statistics Canada,	BEA, BLS, Bloom	berg.											



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20		2021			2022				
Q3	Q4 Q1f	Q2f	Q3f Q4f	Q1f	Q2f	Q3f	Q4f		
	(%, end	d of period)							
0.25 0	0.25 0.25 0.25 0.25 4.25 4.00	0.25	0.25 0.25 0.25 0.25 3.75 3.75	0.25 0.25 4.00	0.25 0.25 4.50	0.25 0.25 4.75	0.50 0.25 5.00		
1.75 1 0.25 0 0.50 0	2.00 2.50 1.75 1.75 0.25 0.25 0.50 0.50 8.00 40.00	1.75 0.25 0.50	5.50 6.00 2.00 2.50 0.25 0.25 0.50 0.50 44.00 46.00	6.50 3.00 0.25 0.50 48.00	7.00 3.50 0.25 0.75 48.00	7.00 4.00 0.50 1.00 48.00	7.00 4.00 0.50 1.50 48.00		
-0.50 -0	0.00 0.00 0.50 -0.50 0.10 0.10	-0.50 -	0.00 0.00 -0.50 -0.50 0.10 0.10	0.00 -0.50 0.10	0.00 -0.50 0.10	0.00 -0.50 0.10	0.00 -0.50 0.10		
-0.10 -0 3.85 3 4.00 4 0.50 0	0.10 0.10 0.10 -0.10 3.85 3.85 4.00 4.00 0.50 0.50 0.50 0.50	-0.10 - 3.85 4.00 0.50	0.10 0.10 -0.10 -0.10 3.85 3.85 4.00 4.00 0.50 0.50	0.10 -0.10 3.85 4.00 0.50 0.50	0.10 -0.10 3.85 4.00 0.50 0.50	0.10 -0.10 3.85 4.25 0.75	0.10 -0.10 3.85 4.50 1.00		
	(end	of period)							
0.75 0	1.27 1.27 0.79 0.79 9.91 20.81	0.79	1.23 1.23 0.81 0.81 21.53 21.62	1.24 0.81 21.32	1.24 0.81 22.07	1.25 0.80 22.45	1.25 0.80 22.87		
3828 34 3.60 3 784	5.19 5.21 3428 3473 3.62 3.65 711 720 4.15 89.90	3465 3.63 720	4.76 4.55 3458 3450 3.58 3.55 720 720 99.70 106.10	4.47 3438 3.54 720 108.30	4.54 3425 3.52 720 107.20	4.67 3413 3.51 710 105.00	4.63 3400 3.50 700 101.40		
	1.22 1.23 1.37 1.40		1.26 1.26 1.47 1.48	1.25 1.49	1.25 1.49	1.24 1.50	1.24 1.50		
0.72 0 6.79 6 73.8 7 1,170 1,0	103 103 0.77 0.77 6.53 6.60 73.1 74.0 ,086 1,160 30.0 31.0	6.60 74.0 1,160 1	100 100 0.80 0.80 6.40 6.40 72.0 72.0 1,120 1,120 30.2 30.2	102 0.79 6.50 73.0 1,140 30.6	102 0.79 6.50 73.0 1,140 30.6	104 0.78 6.60 74.0 1,160 31.0	104 0.78 6.60 74.0 1,160 31.0		
0.25 0 0.35 0 0.56 0	0.07 0.10 0.20 0.28 0.39 0.90 0.68 1.50 1.21 1.90	0.35 1.00 1.55	0.15 0.15 0.40 0.60 1.10 1.15 1.60 1.65 2.00 2.00	0.20 0.75 1.25 1.70 2.05	0.25 0.90 1.35 1.75 2.10	0.40 1.00 1.50 1.80 2.10	0.60 1.10 1.60 1.85 2.10		
0.13 0 0.28 0 0.68 0	0.36 0.85 0.91 1.60	0.25 0.90 1.70	0.10 0.10 0.30 0.45 1.05 1.10 1.80 2.00 2.40 2.45	0.10 0.60 1.15 2.05 2.50	0.10 0.70 1.25 2.10 2.55	0.10 0.85 1.40 2.15 2.55	0.15 1.00 1.55 2.20 2.55		
	0.13 0.28 0.68	0.13 0.12 0.15 0.28 0.36 0.85 0.68 0.91 1.60	0.13 0.12 0.15 0.25 0.28 0.36 0.85 0.90 0.68 0.91 1.60 1.70	0.13 0.12 0.15 0.25 0.30 0.45 0.28 0.36 0.85 0.90 1.05 1.10 0.68 0.91 1.60 1.70 1.80 2.00	0.13 0.12 0.15 0.25 0.30 0.45 0.60 0.28 0.36 0.85 0.90 1.05 1.10 1.15 0.68 0.91 1.60 1.70 1.80 2.00 2.05	0.13 0.12 0.15 0.25 0.30 0.45 0.60 0.70 0.28 0.36 0.85 0.90 1.05 1.10 1.15 1.25 0.68 0.91 1.60 1.70 1.80 2.00 2.05 2.10	0.13 0.12 0.15 0.25 0.30 0.45 0.60 0.70 0.85 0.28 0.36 0.85 0.90 1.05 1.10 1.15 1.25 1.40 0.68 0.91 1.60 1.70 1.80 2.00 2.05 2.10 2.15		



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The Provinces					(annual %	change ex	cept where	noted)			
Real GDP	CA	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	ВС
2010–19	2.2	1.0	2.3	1.1	0.7	1.9	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.6	2.8
2019	1.9	4.0	5.1	2.4	1.2	2.7	2.1	0.6	-0.7	0.1	2.7
2020e	-5.4	-5.1	-3.6	-4.0	-3.2	-5.1	-5.7	-3.6	-5.2	-6.8	-5.0
2021f	6.2	3.8	5.2	5.6	5.2	6.6	6.3	5.1	5.9	6.0	6.1
2022f	4.0	1.5	3.3	3.5	3.4	4.1	4.2	3.5	3.6	4.3	4.1
Nominal GDP											
2010–19	4.0	3.5	4.3	2.9	2.8	3.8	4.1	3.8	3.3	3.7	4.5
2019	3.6	4.1	7.0	3.8	3.0	4.3	3.8	1.0	0.1	2.7	4.4
2020e	-4.6	-6.8	-1.7	-2.1	-1.3	-3.9	-4.4	-1.6	-7.5	-9.3	-2.3
2021f	9.7	9.0	7.5	8.0	7.4	9.1	9.4	7.2	10.7	12.1	9.1
2022f	6.9	4.5	5.7	5.8	5.8	6.8	6.8	6.0	7.4	8.0	6.4
Employment											
2010–19	1.3	0.6	1.5	0.3	0.0	1.2	1.4	0.9	0.8	1.2	2.0
2019	2.2	1.1	3.3	2.3	8.0	2.0	2.8	1.0	1.9	0.7	3.0
2020	-5.1	-5.7	-3.2	-4.7	-2.6	-4.8	-4.8	-3.7	-4.7	-6.6	-6.6
2021f	4.2	3.4	4.1	4.3	3.9	4.3	4.3	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.4
2022f	3.6	1.0	2.9	3.1	2.9	3.6	3.8	3.2	3.3	3.9	3.6
Unemployment Rate (%)											
2010–19	6.9	13.3	10.6	8.7	9.4	7.1	7.0	5.6	5.3	6.2	6.1
2019	5.7	12.3	8.7	7.4	8.1	5.1	5.6	5.3	5.6	7.0	4.7
2020	9.6	14.1	10.4	9.8	10.0	8.9	9.6	8.0	8.4	11.4	8.9
2021f	8.0	13.0	9.0	8.2	8.9	7.3	8.0	6.8	7.0	10.0	7.3
2022f	5.7	12.2	7.4	6.6	7.2	5.1	5.6	5.0	5.1	7.5	5.0
Housing Starts (units, 000s)											
2010–19	201	2.2	0.8	4.2	2.7	44	70	6.6	6.0	31	34
2019	209	0.9	1.5	4.7	2.9	48	69	6.9	2.4	27	45
2020	219	0.8	1.0	4.9	3.7	55	81	7.3	3.1	24	38
2021f	222	0.8	1.2	5.0	3.1	57	80	6.3	3.2	27	39
2022f	214	8.0	1.2	4.5	2.5	52	76	6.0	3.5	29	38
Motor Vehicle Sales (units, 000s)						8		ł			
2010–19	1,819	33	7	51	41	432	715	55	53	237	194
2019	1,916	34	8	53	41	454	789	53	46	227	214
2020	1,569	28	7	44	34	376	612	46	40	186	180
2021f	1,790	31	8	50	38	439	712	52	45	211	206
2022f	1,920	32	8	52	40	472	769	54	47	225	221
Budget Balances, (CAD mn)						}		}			
2019*	-39,400	-1,383	22	2	98	4	-8,672	5	-319	-12,152	-321
2020e	-381,600	-1,838	-178	-779	-13	-2,991	-38,468	-2,048	-2,045	-20,192	-13,643
2021f	-141,200		-70			-8,250	-33,100		-1,350	-18,221	
2022f	-50,700		-38			-7,000	-28,150		-855	-10,982	

^{*} NL budget balance in 2019 is net of one-time revenue boost via Atlantic Accord.

Sources: Scotiabank Economics, Statistics Canada, CMHC, Budget documents; Quebec budget balance figures are after Generations Fund and Stabilization Reserve transfers.



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