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"It has been said that a pretty face is a passport. But it's not, it's a visa, and it runs out fast."

Julie Burchill
-British Journalist -

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It may be the shortest month of the year but the wave of announcements originating in Washington is making it feel like a very long month for many Canadians. The on-again-off-again Trump tariffs hang over our economy like the sword of Damocles. Currency and market forecasts are being revised constantly, depending on the most recent news flow. **Capital Group** is back this month with an article from their former president and one of their longest running portfolio managers. U.S. stock valuations are generally considered lofty compared to non-U.S. markets and this topic is examined in more depth. Despite the large outperformance of U.S. equities over their international peers in the last decade, he continues to see many positives for U.S. markets, especially for the broader universe of stocks beyond the tech giants. However, the author also predicts a more interesting backdrop for international stocks and their potential to begin catching up with the U.S. leaders.

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The impact of tariffs is touched on along with exploring how this acceleration trend fits into something he refers to as “the new geography of investing.“ Simply put, it focuses on where companies derive their revenue, not where they are technically located in the world. This fact and other complexities of the evolving patterns of international trade will mean that stock selection will be increasingly important, going forward. Some companies will excel in this environment and others will struggle to adjust.

Canada has been in the crosshairs of the recent policy and commentary from the White House, and a recent piece from the **Financial Post** examines what this means for our country and how we might adapt and reinvent our own policies to weather the storm and improve our own economic and societal trajectories. The broad- ranging piece suggests the recent turmoil from the new U.S. administration lays bare some of Canada’s vulnerabilities, many of which are not new phenomena. Housing affordability and declining productivity and GDP/per capita are issues several decades old and it is suggested the current tariff crisis can be used to spur substantial policy changes to address these problems. With the upcoming federal election, one would hope parties will advance serious action steps that set Canada back on a positive trajectory on many of these measures. Recycling what hasn’t worked would seem a dismal path.

It is sometimes said that people vote with their feet and **Visual Capitalist** has a somewhat unusual factoid this month, wherein they rank the most powerful passports in the world. They rank them by how many countries accept travellers from other nations without also requiring visas. This measure is often considered a proxy for global mobility and, perhaps, this may explain the increased interest in the last few years in *golden visa* programs that allow people to acquire an additional passport from other countries. Singapore, South Korea, and Japan lead the field, closely followed by many of the western European countries. While Canada and the USA are lower, the actual difference in visa-free countries is quite small, amongst the leaders. While a Singapore passport is welcomed by 193 countries visa-free, the seventh ranked Canadian passport is accepted in 185 countries. For comparison, an Indian passport is ranked 80th, with only 56 visa-free entries.

Capital Group: Rob Lovelace on what could drive markets in 2025

As we enter the midpoint of the decade, investors are asking many of the same questions they did at the start of the 2020s. Can U.S. equities continue their long winning streak? What are the catalysts needed to boost international markets? How will changes in global trade and tariffs affect companies and the economy? And what does it all mean for your portfolio?

In this wide-ranging Q&A, Rob Lovelace, veteran portfolio manager and former president of Capital Group, offers his view on where markets are headed, how tariffs could impact the global economy, and select investment themes driving his portfolio decisions.

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Financial Post: Canada's economy is at a crossroads: Here's what has to happen next

Recent trade threat have laid bare longstanding economic vulnerabilities that have become more noticeable.

Stephen Poloz likens the moment currently facing the Canadian economy to the country's founding, which came soon after the United States abandoned a reciprocal trade treaty in 1866.

"After the Civil War, (the U.S.) decided they were walking away from that agreement," the former Bank of Canada governor and current senior adviser at Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP said. "The solution was actually, 'We're a bigger place than we used to be; we should just trade with each other.' So they created Confederation. Imagine that: 150 years later, here we are."

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Visual Capitalist: Charted: The Most Powerful Passports in 2025

A strong passport provides greater travel freedom, lower costs, and easier global mobility for work, study, and leisure. But which passports are the most powerful in

2025?

This ranking is based on data from *Henley & Partners*, which determines the number of countries a passport holder can visit visa-free.

Asian Passports Lead the Way

Asia dominates the top rankings, with Singapore, Japan, and South Korea offering visa-free access to over 190 countries out of 227 destinations worldwide. Interestingly, Japan regained visa-free access to neighboring China for the first time since the COVID-19 lockdowns.
Germany and France, which held the top spot in 2024, have now dropped to third place.

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