

This report looks at Joe Oliver, minister of finance's progress to date, and assigns a grade to his government's performance to date.

Minister of Finance Score: -82.9

The evaluation criteria are outlined in table 1 below, and were derived from published articles since 2009. Each category, such as GDP, was evaluated against positive and negative indicators and weights assigned. As this approach is inherently subjective, I have enclosed the related spread sheet, and encourage you make up your own scenarios if you are so inclined. Examples of the biases in the scorecard are listed below:

- Canada's economic ranking against other countries. 1 point for every place we moved up since the credit crisis 11th place (5 in all).
- Personal view that money in the hands of consumers has more economic power than spending on infrastructure and subsidizing industry, therefore weight for austerity relatively high.
- Relatively high weight to venture capital.
- Concern over CMHC housing liability equal to weighting of -1 for every billion liability for which Canadians are on the hook if housing bubble bursts.
- Household debt to income ratio resulting in weighting of - 1 point for every 10 basis points over ratio of 90%.

Table1, scorecard of economic indicators and weighted scores

Category	Negative indicators	Positive indicators	Weight	Score	Subtotal
Economic Comparison against rest of world	Canada's slipping competitive status highlights some of economists' biggest long-term concerns about the Canadian economy: Underinvestment in innovation and technology. Private sector spending on R&D ranks 27th.		5	-9	-45
GDP growth	Growth hovering below the 2-per-cent mark. US 2.8, UK 2.3 China 6.5. With oil crisis in play, this could drop significantly for 2015.		2	2	4
Jobs	Unemployment at 6.8 per cent versus 5.5 per cent US. Jobs being created are largely bad ones - part-time.		1.3	-1	-1.3
Trade balance	5 billion in 2014 vs +43 billion in 2008. Likely 2015 significant deficit due to falling commodity prices. Oil trading in the \$30-40 range.		0.5	-5	-2.5

Business investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •630 billion corporate deposits, up from \$534 billion in 2012. • Two-thirds of Canadian firms indicated that domestic/global demand, sector-specific issues, and taxes/regulations were affecting their investment decisions. Manufacturing badly reeling, in addition to oil sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada's federal corporate tax rate, for example, is among the lowest in advanced economies. • According to FP, there is record investments in machinery, equipment and technology, even more so than in the US. Weak dollar means advantages for investors • Equipment purchasing • Tax breaks • Only 10 per cent of firms suggested that access to credit was an issue. 	5	-1	-5
Venture capital	Compared to Google, PayPal, Amazon, Elon Musk's Tesla-SpaceX-SolarCity we are laggards in innovation. Most money has gone to Oil.	Venture Capital Action Plan (VCAP) announced in 2013. This is the third VCAP announcement to date, alongside the NorthLeaf Venture Catalyst Fund announced earlier this year and the Teralys Capital Innovation Fund announced last week.	3	0.5	1.5
Credit card fees		Savings of six to 22 per cent reduced interchange rates charged to merchants. Visa and MC pledged to freeze rates for the next five years.	0.2 5	0.2 5	0.06 25
Bank rate	As opposed to the US an increase in the bank rate could cause high risk and leveraged borrowers to default	0.75%	3	1	3
CMHC	IMF sounds fresh alarm over housing market.		1	-5	-5
Austerity		Plan tax breaks for families and tax splitting for low-income spouse.	5	-2	-10
Data		After years of no data it has been announce that foreign real-estate purchases will be tracked.	2	-2	-4
Balanced budget	Selling off crown corporations From the public's point of view, the oil price drop may well qualify, blowing about a \$6 billion hole in Ottawa's finances. Even in November, the government was forecasting an average oil price of about \$65 a barrel this year. Today, hovering around \$40. Projecting 2% growth, an unlikely event given the current market.		1	-4	-4
Household debt	163%	Has remained stable	2	-5	-10
Inflation	1.3-per-cent, mostly due to food inflation.		5	0.2 5	1.25

In conclusion, Oliver “does not see a bubble” despite dismal economic data, an oil crisis, and a weak declining manufacturing sector. CBC report that we should, “not fool ourselves into thinking this is a mild recession,” writes Louis-Philippe Rochon. (Rochon, 2015)

The following is a compilation of published articles focussed on the Minister of Finance, dating from 2009.

[OTTAWA ANNOUNCES SALE OF \\$1.5 BILLION IN 50-YEAR BONDS](#)

CBC

Finance Minister Joe Oliver says the government has successfully sold \$1.5 billion in 50-year Government of Canada bonds to take advantage of a strong bond market and low interest rates in order to lock in long-term funding.

[BEHIND THE POSTAL BANKING PUSH](#)

G&M - Michael Babad

The U.S. Post Office should get into banking. With that assertion, agency Inspector General David Williams created quite a stir a few months ago. Behind the proposal are dueling postal officials with very different policy positions and agendas. Plus a murmur of momentum on Capitol Hill. American Banker reporter Kevin Wack explains. April 1BMO's chief executive officer, Bill Downe, did give Mr. Oliver a head's up before the bank unveiled the cut. March 31

[JOE OLIVER CALLS FOR VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT TO LOWER CREDIT-CARD FEES FOR RETAILERS](#)

FP - Leah Schnur

'We would like to see this proceed on a voluntary basis at this point. 'We're looking at months, not years, obviously,' the Finance Minister said Sept 5

[EIGHT BANKS AGREE TO NO-COST ACCOUNTS FOR LOW-INCOME CLIENTS](#)

G&M - Bill Curry

The Conservative government has secured a pledge from Canada's largest banks to offer no-cost banking accounts for an estimated seven million youth, students and low-income seniors. Finance Minister Joe Oliver will make the announcement Tuesday at an Ottawa seniors centre, The Globe and Mail has learned. Canada's eight largest banks have agreed to voluntarily adopt new rules starting next year that would offer no-cost accounts for low-income senior Canadians that would allow at least 12 debit transactions per month.

[JOE OLIVER SAYS FEDERAL BUDGET COULD COME IN MAY](#)

FP - Reuters

Finance Minister Joe Oliver on Wednesday allowed for the possibility that the federal budget for the fiscal year that starts on April 1 could come in May Feb 19

[NDP WANTS FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY EFFECTS OF LOW OIL, WEAK DOLLAR](#)

CBC

NDP finance critic Nathan Cullen wants the House finance committee to seek updates from private-sector economists, Finance Minister Joe Oliver and Bank of Canada governor Stephen Poloz on the state of the economy. Feb 4

[JOE OLIVER SHOULD PROVIDE 'REALITY CHECK' ON NATION'S FINANCES, NDP SAYS](#)

CBC

In the wake of Finance Minister Joe Oliver's unexpected decision to delay his budget until April at the earliest, the New Democrats want him to update the House of Commons on the nation's finances. Jan 27

[JOE OLIVER SAYS OTTAWA LOOKING AT HOT HOUSING MARKET AS MINISTERS MEET](#)

CBC

Finance Minister Joe Oliver says the federal government could take "moderate steps" to address Canada's strong housing market as he began two days of meetings on Sunday with his provincial counterparts. Dec 16

[JOE OLIVER LOOKS ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LOW OIL PRICES](#)

CBC

Federal Finance Minister Joe Oliver is reassuring Canadians that there are benefits to lower oil prices, which could help keep the economy stable despite a decline in corporate tax revenue for the government. Dec 15

[JOE OLIVER SAYS HE'LL BALANCE BUDGET DESPITE FALLING OIL PRICES, DIP IN GDP](#)

CBC

Falling oil prices, today's disappointing GDP numbers, nor the \$2.4-billion cost of the new income-splitting and baby bonus programs announced yesterday will not prevent the federal government from balancing the budget in 2015, according to Finance Minister Joe Oliver. Nov 3

['I DON'T SEE A BUBBLE': JOE OLIVER SAYS THREE BIG MARKETS DISTORTING HOUSING NUMBERS](#)

FP - Garry Marr

The finance minister downplayed fears of a housing bubble and emphasized Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto continue to distort national housing numbers Oct 2

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[FROM ANTI-DEBT TO PRO-STIMULUS: JOE OLIVER ALTERS COURSE IN GLOBAL RECESSION FIGHT](#)

FP - Gordon Isfeld

Analysis: Do as we say now, not as we said then. The federal government has abruptly, and very publicly, changed its message on global recession fighting Sept 25

[CMHC BOSS LEAVES DOORS WIDE OPEN TO POLICY OPTIONS](#)

G&M - Boyd Erman

The government's housing-policy left hand appears to not know what the right hand is doing. One major media outlet suggested Mr. Oliver 'deplayed down' the notions that Mr. Siddall put forward. Sept 23

[JOE OLIVER: NO 'MAJOR MOVES' PLANNED FOR MORTGAGE MARKET](#)

G&M - BNN Video

Finance Minister Joe Oliver is playing down the idea major changes are coming to mortgage rules as policy makers say they want the banks to take on more of the risk. Greg Bonnell has more. Sept 23

[JOE OLIVER CUTS EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PREMIUMS TO HELP STIMULATE HIRING](#)

FP - Linda Nguyen

Joe Oliver said Thursday employment insurance premiums will be cut, reducing EI payroll taxes by nearly 15% and saving businesses more than \$550 million over the next two years Sept 12

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FP - Leah Schnur

'We would like to see this proceed on a voluntary basis at this point. ' We're looking at months, not years, obviously,' the Finance Minister said Sept 5

[JOE OLIVER SAYS REDUCING TAXES A PRIORITY IN 2015](#)

CBC

'We're going to have a surplus,' finance minister says before meeting with business leaders in Quebec Aug 13

[WHY THE MORTGAGE RATE WARS CAN RAGE MORE FREELY: NO FLAHERTY, NO CARNEY](#)

FP - John Greenwood

Analysis: Why did BMO risk a (verbal) slap from Joe Oliver for chopping key mortgage rate below 3%? Because they knew this mortgage war is going to be different March 28

[WHY FINANCE MINISTER JOE OLIVER ISN'T INTERVENING IN CANADA'S HOUSING MARKET](#)

FP - Gordon Isfeld

The IMF issues yet another report urging Ottawa to tighten its reins, yet current Finance Minister Joe Oliver almost seems indifferent March 11

[JOE OLIVER SAYS HE WON'T MEDDLE WITH BANKS' DECISIONS ON RATES](#)

C

Federal Finance Minister Joe Oliver says he has no intention of pushing Canadian banks to follow the Bank of Canada's lead and drop their rates. Jan 26

[CANADA U.S. EUROPE ASIA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL](#)

Regulatory Issues - me

Canada's mortgage insurance premiums are on the rise, and guideline's related to mortgage insurance underwriting have been released. In other regulatory news, Joe Oliver has taken on Jim Flaherty's crusade for a single market watchdog. Meanwhile, tax probes are ongoing in Europe. Beginning in Canada,

[JOE OLIVER TAKES OVER JIM FLAHERTY'S CRUSADE FOR SOLE MARKET WATCHDOG AS A TOP 'PRIORITY'](#)

FP - Barbara Shecter

A former banker and Ontario market watchdog, the new Finance Minister says he has seen the problems with the current patchwork system firsthand April 23

[CANADIAN ECONOMY ON TRACK TO DELIVER TAX BREAKS, JOE OLIVER SAYS](#)

FP - Gordon Isfeld

Finance minister also said the recent drop in oil prices is 'an issue of supply and demand' that could have a negative impact on Canadian energy companies Oct 15

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[INVESTORS PLAYING RISKY GAME IN SEARCH FOR RETURNS, OLIVER WARNS](#)

G&M - David Milliken

Canada's Finance Minister Joe Oliver warned on Monday that investors could be mispricing risk as they hunt for better investment returns, and said policymakers should keep the issue under close review. June 24

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[WHY INVESTMENT BANKS NEED TO SHAVE \\$1-TRILLION OFF THEIR BALANCE SHEETS](#)

FP - Reuters

The 2014 Wholesale & Investment banking Outlook by Morgan Stanley and Oliver Wyman said investment banks needed to cut their balance sheets by about 8 percent, even after cutting them by a fifth in the last four years March 20

[CANADA U.S. EUROPE ASIA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL](#)

Joe Oliver trying to fix Canada's housing is like trying to fix a house of cards just before it starts to collapse. That may be why he isn't intervening. In other news, the Globe and Mail has questioned the benefit of the 78 cent loonie contributing to more exports. Seriously! Lets face it, low rates and a cheap loonie cannot overcome a devoted resourced based policy over night, this could take years. Beginning in Canada

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[CANADA CHINA FINANCE FORUM ATTRACTS A POWERFUL PLATFORM](#)

CNW - Press Release

On July 8, 2015, The Honourable Joe Oliver is set to address private business leaders and financial industry professionals on increasing investment and trade between the two countries. Organized by the Canadian Chinese Finance Association, the Forum will offer insights into favourable cross-border opportunities, the development of new business relationships and, access to today's thought leaders in Canada-China relations.

[Le Canada évitera la récession, estime Joe Oliver](#)

Le Devoir - Le Devoir

L'économie canadienne n'est pas en récession et n'y tombera pas, a assuré vendredi le ministre canadien des Finances Joe Oliver, réagissant aux prévisions pessimistes de grandes banques.

[Finance minister looks to U.S. economy to avoid recession](#)

CBC - Laura Payton

Canadian Finance Minister Joe Oliver says growth in the U.S. economy could help boost Canada's, despite low oil prices and instability in Europe.

[A mild case of 2007 déjà vu](#)

FT - David Oakley

The credit crisis blew up eight years ago next month. The European Central Bank was forced to inject €94.8bn of emergency funds into the money markets after several institutions admitted they had suffered significant losses on credit-related investments.

At the time, it was said to be the first financial crisis fought via BlackBerry from the beaches of some of the world's most exotic locations. The electronic handsets had become the essential accessory to keep investors on their summer breaks in touch with the unfolding crisis.

Today, credit is the area where some predict the next crisis will originate, as money has poured into illiquid fixed income assets in corporate and [emerging market debt](#). In other words, there may be a repeat of 2007 when investors struggled to liquidate assets in markets where it is difficult to sell, except at fire-sale prices.

Morgan Stanley, the investment bank, and Oliver Wyman, the consultancy, wrote in a recent paper that the impact of less liquidity has been masked by benign, ultra-low interest rates. When they reverse, this could reveal the side effects of quantitative easing, which has pushed investors into less liquid securities.

[Is Canada in a recession? Finance Minister Joe Oliver doesn't think so](#)

FP - Gordon Isfeld

Finance Minister Joe Oliver maintains an optimistic outlook on Canada's economy, saying he believes Canada will end the year with positive growth

[Joe Oliver should let the Bank of Canada speak for itself](#)

G&M - Christopher Ragan

Last week, while addressing questions about Canada's fragile economy, federal Finance Minister Joe Oliver was asked whether the Bank of Canada should consider using "quantitative easing" to stimulate Canada's economy. He responded immediately, saying it's "not on the table." But whatever the case for

the use of this approach to monetary policy, Mr. Oliver should know better than to speak about something clearly outside his purview.