



Another mixed year for world stock markets

There were mixed results from the world's main share markets in 2015, with the US and UK very little changed.

Index	2015 Change
FTSE 100	- 4.9%
FTSE All-Share	- 2.5%
Dow Jones Industrial	- 2.2%
Standard & Poor's 500	- 0.7%
Nikkei 225	+ 9.1%
Euro Stoxx 50 (€)	+ 3.9%
Hang Seng	- 7.2%
MSCI Emerging Markets (£)	-12.2%

Drilling into the raw numbers reveals a few interesting insights:

- Although the FTSE 100 fell nearly 5%, this was mainly due to the dominance of the index by multinational commodity and energy companies. The FTSE250, which covers medium sized companies with more of a domestic focus, rose by over 8%.
- Once dividends are taken into account, the FTSE All-Share – the broadest measure of UK shares – produced a positive return of about 1%.
- Sterling had a mixed year, which reduced the returns for UK investors in some foreign markets, but enhanced them in others. The pound was down 4.3% against the Japanese Yen, but up 5.5% against the Euro. The dollar rose by 5.1% against sterling, helped by the Fed's long-awaited first interest rate rise in December.
- Emerging markets turned in widely different returns, particularly once currency movements were taken into account. For all the summer trauma, the main Chinese markets were up on the year.

The value of your investment can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount you invested. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance. Investing in shares should be regarded as a long-term investment and should fit in with your overall attitude to risk and financial circumstances.