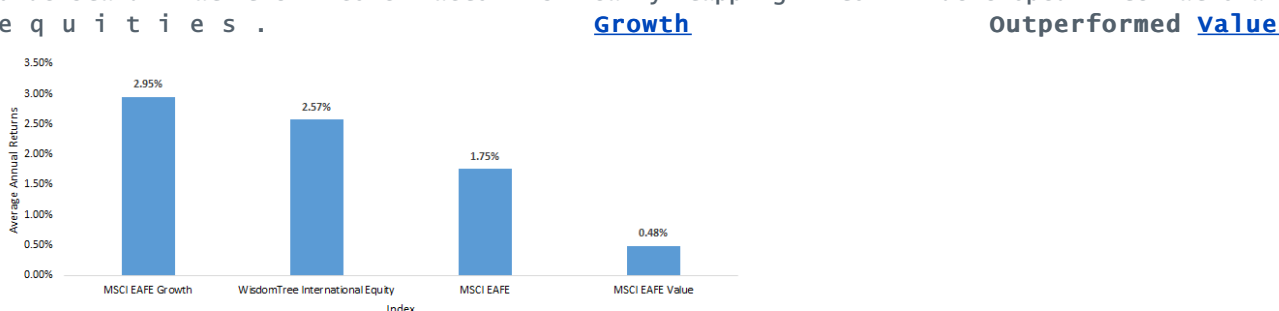


# THE INCOME FACTOR IN DEVELOPED INTERNATIONAL EQUITIES

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07/18/2016

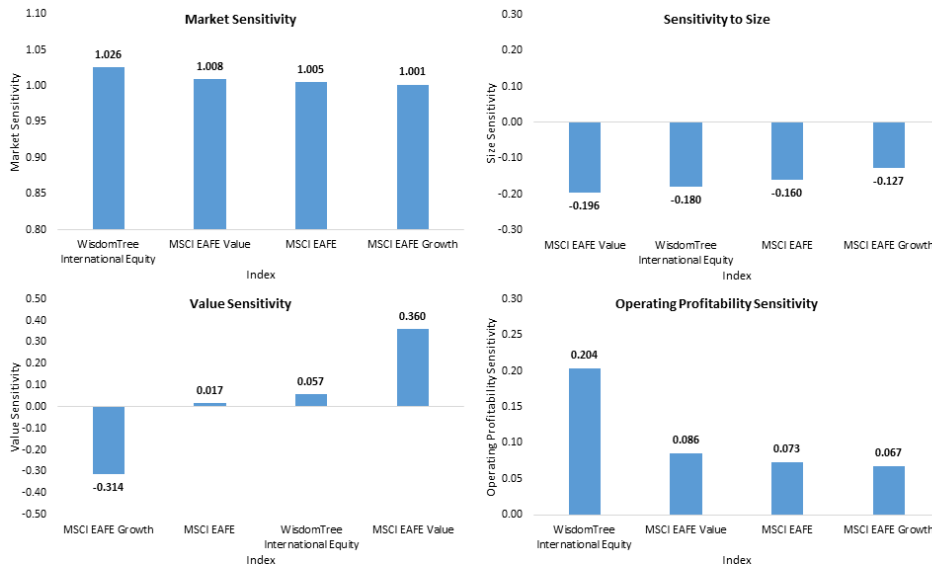
It's interesting that investors will often slice and dice their U.S. equity exposures in almost endless fashion but focus only on the [MSCI EAFE Index](#) when looking abroad. If anything, the [factor](#) discussion becomes even more interesting when you look outside the United States, because, in these less-efficient markets, disciplined strategies governed by a systematic focus on factors could have greater potential to outperform over time.

A Factor Aligned with Investment Goals Similar to what we [wrote about regarding factors in the U.S.](#), it is difficult to picture clients saying that they need size or [momentum](#) or minimum [volatility](#) on an individual basis. In our experience, it is much more common to think of these as tools, which can then lead to the construction of portfolios more aligned with the goals of investors. At WisdomTree, we've developed what we call the income factor in developed international stocks, through the [WisdomTree International Equity Index](#). • This strategy seeks to include all constituents within the same 21 developed markets in the MSCI EAFE Index that have paid regular cash [dividends](#) over the annual cycle that ends May 31 of each year. Beyond the application of WisdomTree [market capitalization](#) and [liquidity](#) requirements, there is not meant to be any real stock selection. • These qualifying constituents are then weighted on the basis of the cash dividends they have paid over the annual cycle leading up to the annual [Index screening date](#). The critical consideration here is that the weighting methodology is designed to not introduce other biases, such as might be seen with either a [dividend yield](#) or [dividend-per-share](#)-weighted approach, which may tilt toward smaller-capitalization firms. If we can quantify the tilts seen over nearly 10 years of performance history for the WisdomTree International Equity Index, we can then understand what the income factor is really tapping into in developed international equities.



Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg. Data is from 6/1/06 to 3/31/16. You cannot invest directly in an index. Index performance does not represent actual fund or portfolio performance. A fund or portfolio may differ significantly from the securities included in the index. Index performance assumes reinvestment of dividends but does not reflect any management fees, transaction costs or other expenses that would be incurred by a portfolio or fund, or brokerage commissions on transactions in fund shares. Such fees, expenses and commissions could reduce returns.

*For definitions of indexes in the chart, visit our [glossary](#).* • Just as we saw in the United States over this period, the growth style outperformed the value style within the developed international equity markets. The WisdomTree International Equity Index outperformed both the MSCI EAFE and [MSCI EAFE Value Index](#) indexes over this period. **The Developed International Income Factor Introduces Tilts Different from the USA Income**



Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg. Data is from 6/1/06 to 3/31/16. You cannot invest directly in an index.

**Factor**

**• The Income**

**Factor Has Greater Market Sensitivity Abroad Than at Home:** In the United States, we saw that the [WisdomTree Dividend Index](#), in its execution of the income factor, delivered a market sensitivity below 1.0. The WisdomTree International Equity Index, on the other hand, delivered a market sensitivity of about 1.03. This tells us that, on a relative basis, the WisdomTree International Equity Index could be apt to more fully capture both upward and downward market moves. One reason for this may be that mid-cap and small-cap growth stocks in developed international markets are much more likely to pay dividends, giving the WisdomTree International Equity Index broader coverage compared to the WisdomTree Dividend Index in the United States.

**• The Income Factor Has Fewer Large-Cap Tilts Abroad Than at Home:** Since a greater proportion of mid-cap and small-cap stocks in developed international markets pay dividends, there tends to be less of a pronounced bias toward large caps in the WisdomTree International Equity Index. We see here that it is fairly in line with both the MSCI EAFE Value and MSCI EAFE indexes.

**• The Value Tilt of the Income Factor Melts Away in Developed International Markets:** while the U.S.-focused WisdomTree Dividend Index exhibited a clear tilt toward value, the WisdomTree International Equity Index turned out to be closer to a core strategy, not tilting significantly toward either the value or the growth end of the spectrum.

**• The Income Factor Tilted toward Robust Operating Profitability in Developed International Markets:** The most notable common thread between the WisdomTree Dividend Index and the WisdomTree International Equity Index was the tilt toward robust operating profitability. Taking the same concept of an extremely broad Index of dividend-paying stocks in two non-overlapping equity markets led to this similar result. WisdomTree’s first dividend-oriented equity Indexes just passed their 10-year anniversary. The WisdomTree International Equity Index, a competitor to the MSCI EAFE Index for long-term, strategic international exposures, shows that dividend weighting was much more than a value-tilted strategy. In a market environment where growth outperformed value by almost 250 [basis points](#) per year, this Index outperformed the MSCI EAFE Index. We believe this was caused by the quality factor tilt. This Index had nearly double the profitability factor exposure of the MSCI EAFE Value Index, largely because the latter just searches for the lowest-priced stocks in a market, with no consideration for quality. Dividends are very commonly associated with attributes of profitability and quality, as firms must have good profits to consistently pay and grow their dividends. These companies that can grow dividends are the ones that receive greater weights in WisdomTree’s Indexes through the annual rebalancing process.

**Important Risks Related to this Article**

Dividends are not guaranteed, and a company currently paying dividends may cease paying dividends at any time.

For standardized performance and the most recent month-end performance click [here](#) NOTE, this material is intended for electronic use only. Individuals who intend to print and physically deliver to an investor must print the monthly performance report to accompany this blog.

For more investing insights, check out our [Economic & Market Outlook](#)

View the online version of this article [here](#).

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## DEFINITIONS

**MSCI EAFE Index**: is a market cap-weighted index composed of companies representative of the developed market structure of developed countries in Europe, Australasia and Japan.

**Factor selection**: Refers to selection process that focuses on common attributes (i.e., factors), be it in terms of their fundamentals or their share price behavior, that are associated with higher returns.

**Momentum Factor**: Characterized by assets with recent price increase trends over time. This term is also associated with the Momentum Factor which associates these stock characteristics with excess return vs the market over time.

**volatility**: A measure of the dispersion of actual returns around a particular average level.&nbsp;nbsp;

**Qualified dividends**: Dividend paid by corporations meeting certain criteria defined by the Internal Revenue Service and therefore eligible in certain instances to be taxed at rates below a tax filer's tax bracket on ordinary income.

**Market Capitalization**: Market cap = share prices x number of shares outstanding. Firms with the highest values receive the highest weights in approaches designed to weight firms by market cap.

**Liquidity**: The degree to which an asset or security can be bought or sold in the market without affecting the asset's price. Liquidity is characterized by a high level of trading activity. Assets that can be easily bought or sold are known as liquid asset.

**Annual screening date**: The screening date refers to the date upon which characteristics of eligible constituent firms are measured, whereas the rebalance refers to when the results from the screening date are implemented by way of Index weights and constituents.

**Dividend yield**: A financial ratio that shows how much a company pays out in dividends each year relative to its share price.

**Dividends per Share**: The sum of declared dividends for every ordinary share issued. Dividend per share (DPS) is the total dividends paid out over an entire year (including interim dividends but not including special dividends) divided by the number of outstanding ordinary shares issued.

**Growth**: Characterized by higher price levels relative to fundamentals, such as dividends or earnings. Price levels are higher because investors are willing to pay more due to their expectations of future improvements in these fundamentals.

**Value**: Characterized by lower price levels relative to fundamentals, such as earnings or dividends. Prices are lower because investors are less certain of the performance of these fundamentals in the future. This term is also related to the Value Factor, which associates these stock characteristics with excess returns vs the market over tim.

**MSCI EAFE Value Index**: Market capitalization-weighted subset of stocks within the MSCI EAFE Index that have lower share prices relative to their earnings or dividends per share.

**Basis point**: 1/100th of 1 percent.