

MARKETING

Total wealth of billionaires increases 16pc to \$8tn

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Image courtesy of Neiman Marcus

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Billionaires around the world are seeing a particularly positive year so far, with 1,037 individuals increasing their net worth, according to a new study from Hurun.

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Hurun's "Global Rich List 2017" shows that 343 individuals joined the world's billionaire list as established persons saw their wealth grow. However, 740 people saw a decrease in funds and 276 dropped off the list from last year completely.

"The world today has 5,000 dollar billionaires, assuming that for every one we have found we have missed at least one," said Rupert Hoogewerf, chairman and chief researcher at Hurun Report. "While some billionaires go to extraordinary lengths to conceal their wealth, for the most part it is that they are discreet and prefer operating under the radar."

The list ranked 2,257 billionaires from 68 countries and 1811 companies, based in the U.S. dollar.

Rich individual rankings

Germany is rising in the ranks of its citizens becoming world billionaires, with 27 of its residents joining the list. The increase brings Germany to third place in the rankings of which countries billionaires are from.

However, India saw 11 individuals drop off the list.

Bill Gates is still labeled as the wealthiest, with \$81 billion, just beating out Warren Buffet whose net worth is \$78 billion. Mr. Buffet saw an increase of 15 percent.

Jeff Besos has increased his wealth in a significant jump from \$19 billion to \$78 billion, making him the individual with the fastest growing wealth. Elon Musk broke into the top 100 for the first time this year.



Courtesy of Net-a-Porter

Real estate has dropped down to fourth place in ranking sectors from which these individuals made their wealth, coming in behind manufacturing and investments. Technology is now holding the top spot.

However, logistics and retail are the fastest growing sectors.

Women only make up 15 percent of the world's billionaires. One-third have made the list from inheritance, and 152 are self-made billionaires.

The richest woman is the primary shareholder of L'Oreal, at \$37 billion.



Image courtesy of L'Oreal

Chinese women make up 79.5 percent of the world's richest women. Chen Lihua, who is the leading self-made woman billionaire, made her money as a real estate mogul.

Additional insights

The United States is the preferred destination for affluent Chinese looking for education, immigration and overseas realty opportunities, according to another by Hurun.

While Tiffany & Co. and Apple rank as affluent Chinese's favorite jeweler and gifting brand, respectively, the travel and hospitality sector, as well as real estate, has benefited from Chinese interest. The U.S. is a top three travel destination, behind the Maldives and France, for Chinese consumers, a trend that will allow U.S.-based brands to put their best foot forward ([see more](#)).

Despite political and economic uncertainty, the global ultra-high-net-worth population continues to grow, with 6,340 new individuals added in 2016, according to Knight Frank's 11th annual Wealth Report.

After a decline of 3 percent in 2015, last year's UHNW additions brought the global total of individuals, with more than \$30 million in net assets, to 193,490. While this population is estimated to grow by 43 percent in the next decade, global factors in the next 12 to 24 months, such as Brexit, European elections and United States President Trump's policies, will have an impact on how the ultra-wealthy invest, and in what, and where they live ([see more](#)).

"Billionaires are up again in the last year, on the back of a strong U.S. dollar, which rose 14 percent on average against major currencies, coupled with strong stock market performances on Nasdaq and London, up 24 percent and 26 percent respectively," Mr. Hoogewerf said. "The DAX was up 22 percent and the Shanghai Stock Exchange returned a growth of 7 percent.

"On top of that we have had Brexit, Donald Trump's election, a surge in property values in China, demonetization in India and a 67 percent boom in the Brazilian stock markets," he said.

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