RESEARCH

Ultrawealthy population to balloon 28pc by 2028: report

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A greater influx of UHNWIs is expected to follow in the coming years. Image credit: Altrata

By ZACH JAMES

According to recent findings from data intelligence firm Altrata, the most exclusive sect of affluent individuals in the world welcomed more members to their ranks last year.

The World Ultra Wealth Report 2024 showcases the global growth of the ultra-wealthy class, with its population expanding by 7.6 percent in 2023, reaching 426,330 people and marking a rebound following declines in 2022. This top echelon of earners resides around the world, but the United States continues to dominate the rankings, both in total population and combined net worth.

Research in the publication is based on proprietary data from Altrata, which is then used to make estimates of wealth population density and net worth through its Wealth and Investable Assets Model. The firm defines an ultra-wealthy person as one with a net worth of more than $30 million, with the top class of affluent individuals being billionaires.
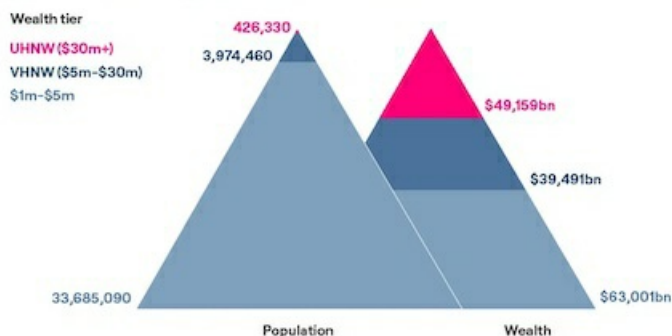
Rising ranks
UHNWIs represent 1 percent of the global millionaire population but hold just under a third of the group's total wealth $49.2 trillion.

These ratios could soon change, as the caste has been on a near-constant growth path over the past five years, increasing in size by 20 percent since 2018. In the next four years, the sect is predicted to balloon at an unprecedented scale.

The wealthy by tier

Global population and wealth by major wealth tier in 2023

Wealth tier
UHNW ($30m+)
VHNW ($5m-$30m)
$1m-$5m

426,330
3,974,460

$49,159bn

$39,491bn

33,685,090

$63,001bn

Population   Wealth

Source: Wealth-X, an Altrata company, 2024

A boom among the wealthy class is expected in the coming years. Image credit: Altrata

By 2028, the firm projects the number of UHNWIs to peak at more than 587,000 people, a nearly 40 percent jump from current figures. With the uptick, $19 trillion of newly generated cash will come along with the surging millionaire population, which will grow globally, not localizing in one continent or country.

These findings line up with the sentiments of the wealthy community themselves, as a majority foresee their personal wealth expanding by the end of 2024 (see story).

Altrata credits the adoption of generative AI, more women participating in emerging markets and new governmental industrial incentives for the expected influx of currency and fresh-faced UHNWIs.

As of the end of 2023, the ultra-wealthy class accounts for 30 percent of worldwide spending on luxury goods, totaling $118 billion. With the elite group set to have more money available to spend in the coming years, the high-end product market, from fashion to automotive, could see another boom period, much like what followed the end of the pandemic.

Regional residency

North America, particularly the U.S., saw its UHNWI population expand greatly in 2023.

Jumping up by 11.9 percent, the number of people worth upwards of $30 million in the continent climbed to 161,280 people. The figure represents just under 40 percent of the global ultra-wealthy group.

> The top 10 cities, including New York, Hong Kong, and Los Angeles, are home to around 18% of the global UHNW population. These cities' UHNW populations saw strong growth last year, except for Hong Kong, which remained stagnant. pic.twitter.com/kXxeGgvceU
>
> Altrata (@AltrataOfficial) July 24, 2024

The U.S. also is home to six of the top 10 most populous cities in regards to UHNWIs, including New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Dallas, respectively. According to London-based investment migration consultancy Henley & Partners, Singapore is also making its way up the list (see story).

Europe saw its ultra-wealthy population grow by 9 percent in 2023, with Asia following suit to the tune of 2.7 percent harbored by surges in Japan, Taiwan and South Korea as China stagnates. The regions could see declines by the end of the year, as HNWIs emigrate from the United Kingdom and China in droves (see story).