



03/08/12: How does your wealth compare?

Do you ever wonder how you or your family stack up against the rest of the world (or at least the U.S.), in terms of your wealth (or poverty, if you'd prefer to call it that)? Certainly, you must think, this is a pretty wealthy country so you're probably way down on the list. And yes, the US is still the wealthiest country on the planet, but you might be surprised at how that wealth is distributed.

I am assuming here that you know your wealth, which can be defined as your investable assets, plus your home value and any tangible assets, less any debts that you owe. This number is also called your net worth. (A side note: if you do not know your net worth, consider this email a reminder to calculate it for yourself. Everyone should know their net worth.)

I recently conducted some research on this topic and found the statistics below. While the data is slightly dated from 2010, it is still interesting to see how relatively few people hold most of the wealth in this country.

Facts about the Wealth of U.S. Citizens in 2010

- Total household wealth: \$56.8 Trillion
- Population of the United States: 308 million
- Number of households: 115 million
- Number of households with investable assets of \$1 million or more: 8.4 million (7.3% of total households)
- Number of households with investable assets of \$5 million or more: 1.1 million (less than 1% of total households)
- Even though their numbers are few, millionaires control about 56% of U.S. wealth
- Median net worth of all Caucasian households (2009): \$113,000 (this means that half of the households have less than \$113,000 and half have more.)

As you can see, most of the significant wealth is held by relatively few, so is very top heavy in the U.S. And it has become increasingly top heavy over the last several decades as well, so if anything these trends are increasing.

Source: Spectrem Group, Federal Reserve, Pew Research Center

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