Forbes

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The Little Black Book of Billionaire Secrets

# The World's Most Powerful Women In 2016



*AP Photo/Markus Schreiber*

Who are the world's most powerful women this year? They are the smartest and toughest female business leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, scientists, philanthropists and CEOs making their mark in the world today. They're women who are building billion-dollar brands, calling the shots in the financial markets, and crisscrossing the globe to broker international agreements and provide aid.

Their accomplishments are formidable on their own, and even more so given how hard it can be to establish inroads into industries and job titles traditionally dominated by men. Statistics on women in positions of power remain bleak. According to the latest survey by Catalyst, a nonprofit that tracks gender parity in the workplace, women occupy a measly 4% of corner offices at S&P 500 companies.  And they hold only 25% of executive or senior-level jobs in those same firms.

Amidst sobering numbers like these, one offers new promise. Since 2005, the number of women who are world leaders—presidents or heads of state—had more than doubled by last year, according to the Pew Research Center.

Evidence of this trend is visible. In the past year alone, Taiwan, Myanmar, Nepal, Croatia, Mauritius, and Lithuania have elected or reelected female leaders to office. And of course, there is U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, who as of press time continues to hold the lead in the primaries.

This election-year “2016 Global Leaders” list honors these women, who join seasoned pros such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel, number-one Power Woman for six years running.

As with every year, four metrics were used: money (either net worth, company revenues, or GDP); media presence; spheres of influence; and impact, analyzed both within the context of each woman’s field (media, technology, business, philanthropy, politics, and finance) and outside of it.

With the advent of more women behind the presidential desk, we had to make some tough decisions—most notably, cutting the Celebrities category to make room. And so new leaders replace icons, with a spate of new countries joining the list.

Curating this year’s list inspired the usual reexamination of what it means to be powerful, and, more to the point, what it means to be powerful as a woman. Power can be subjective. Is it control, or is it influence?

Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, the first woman to become president in Mauritius, believes it’s the latter. “People say to have power, you hire and you fire,” she says. “I don’t subscribe to this notion. For me, power is the ability to influence. If you can influence in the long-term by leaving behind a legacy, to me, that’s real power.”

There is no doubt that the women on this year’s list are doing just that.

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #1 | Angela Merkel | 61 | Germany |
|  | #2 | Hillary Clinton | 68 | United States |
|  | #3 | Janet Yellen | 69 | United States |
|  | #4 | Melinda Gates | 51 | United States |
|  | #5 | Mary Barra | 54 | United States |
|  | #6 | Christine Lagarde | 60 | France |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #7 | Sheryl Sandberg | 46 | United States | |
|  | #8 | Susan Wojcicki | 47 | United States | |
|  | #9 | Meg Whitman | 59 | United States | |
|  | #10 | Ana Patricia Botín | 55 | Spain | |
|  | #11 | Ginni Rometty | 58 | United States | |
|  | #12 | Park Geun-hye | 64 | South Korea | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #13 | Michelle Obama | 52 | United States |
|  | #14 | Indra Nooyi | 60 | United States |
|  | #15 | Angela Ahrendts | 56 | United States |
|  | #16 | Abigail Johnson | 54 | United States |
|  | #17 | Tsai Ing-wen | 59 | Taiwan |
|  | #18 | Michelle Bachelet | 64 | Chile |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #19 | Federica Mogherini | 42 | Italy |
|  | #20 | Safra Catz | 54 | United States |
|  | #21 | Oprah Winfrey | 62 | United States |
|  | #22 | Helen Clark | 66 | New Zealand |
|  | #23 | U.S. Supreme Court Justices | - | United States |
|  | #24 | Marillyn Hewson | 62 | United States |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #25 | Arundhati Bhattacharya | 60 | India |
|  | #26 | Aung Sun Suu Kyi | 70 | Myanmar |
|  | #27 | Ruth Porat | 58 | United States |
|  | #28 | Anna Wintour | 66 | United States |
|  | #29 | Queen Elizabeth II | 90 | United Kingdom |
|  | #30 | Ho Ching | 63 | Singapore |
|  | #31 | Adena Friedman | 46 | United States |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #32 | Irene Rosenfeld | 63 | United States |
|  | #33 | Loretta Lynch | 57 | United States |
|  | #34 | Ursula Burns | 57 | United States |
|  | #35 | Lucy Peng | 43 | China |
|  | #36 | Sheikh Hasina Wajed | 68 | Bangladesh |
|  | #37 | Sri Mulyani Indrawati | 53 | Indonesia |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #38 | Margaret Chan | 68 | China |
|  | #39 | Drew Gilpin Faust | 68 | United States |
|  | #40 | Chanda Kochhar | 54 | India |
|  | #41 | Samantha Power | 45 | United States |
|  | #42 | Pollyanna Chu | 58 | Hong Kong |
|  | #43 | Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi | 54 | United Arab Emirates |
|  | #44 | Amy Hood | 44 | United States |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #45 | Beth Comstock | 55 | United States |
|  | #46 | Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović | 48 | Croatia |
|  | #47 | Bonnie Hammer | 65 | United States |
|  | #48 | Ertharin Cousin | 59 | United States |
|  | #49 | Laurene Powell Jobs | 52 | United States |
|  | #50 | Nicola Sturgeon | 45 | Scotland |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #51 | Gina Rinehart | 62 | Australia |
|  | #52 | Bidya Devi Bhandari | 54 | Nepal |
|  | #53 | Dana Walden | 51 | United States |
|  | #54 | Phebe Novakovic | 57 | United States |
|  | #55 | Marissa Mayer | 41 | United States |
|  | #56 | Elvira Nabiullina | 52 | Russia |
|  | #57 | Rosalind Brewer | 53 | United States |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #58 | Peng Liyuan | 53 | China |
|  | #59 | Nemat (Minouche) Shafik | 54 | United Kingdom |
|  | #60 | Mary Callahan Erdoes | 48 | United States |
|  | #61 | Zhou Qunfei | 46 | Hong Kong |
|  | #62 | Nguyen Thi Phuong Thao | 46 | - |
|  | #63 | Dong Mingzhu | 62 | - |

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|  | #64 | Güler Sabanci | 61 | Turkey |
|  | #65 | Lubna S. Olayan | 60 | Saudi Arabia |
|  | #66 | Susan Cameron | 57 | United States |
|  | #67 | Donna Langley | 48 | United Kingdom |
|  | #68 | Katharine Viner | 44 | United Kingdom |
|  | #69 | Feng Ying Wang | - | China |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #70 | Arianna Huffington | 65 | United States |
|  | #71 | Diane von Furstenberg | 69 | United States |
|  | #72 | Dalia Grybauskaitė | 60 | Lithuania |
|  | #73 | Tory Burch | 49 | United States |
|  | #74 | Mary Jo White | 68 | United States |
|  | #75 | Kaci Kullmann Five | 65 | Norway |

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|  | #76 | Gwynne Shotwell | 52 | United States |
|  | #77 | Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw | 63 | India |
|  | #78 | Zanny Minton Beddoes | - | United Kingdom |
|  | #79 | Miuccia Prada | 67 | Italy |
|  | #80 | Folorunsho Alakija | 65 | Nigeria |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #81 | Solina Chau | 54 | Hong Kong |
|  | #82 | Judy Faulkner | 72 | United States |
|  | #83 | Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf | 77 | Liberia |
|  | #84 | Fabiola Gianotti | 55 | Italy |
|  | #85 | Lynn Good | - | United States |
|  | #86 | Mary Meeker | 56 | United States |
|  | #87 | Patricia Harris | 59 | United States |

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|  | #88 | Eliza Manningham-Buller | 67 | United Kingdom |
|  | #89 | Irina Bokova | 63 | Bulgaria |
|  | #90 | Sara Blakely | 45 | United States |
|  | #91 | Raja Easa Al Gurg | - | United Arab Emirates |
|  | #92 | Debra Cafaro | - | United States |
|  | #93 | Shobhana Bhartia | 59 | India |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | #94 | Greta Van Susteren | 61 | United States |
|  | #95 | Heather Bresch | 46 | United States |
|  | #96 | Ameenah Gurib-Fakim | 56 | Mauritius |
|  | #97 | Risa Lavizzo-Mourey | 61 | United States |
|  | #98 | Lee Boo-Jin | 45 | South Korea |
|  | #99 | Beth Brooke-Marciniak | 56 | United States |
|  | #100 | Jenny Lee | 44 | Singapore |