

DATA AT A GLANCE

# Countries With the Largest Increases in Gross Domestic Product Per Capita in the World, 1980-2018

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Over time, countries are expected to improve their status by addressing several development indicators, such as their gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, which refers to economic outputs divided by the total population. Just how many countries throughout the world have improved their GDP per capita from 1980 to 2018, and which countries have the largest increases in their GDP per capita? We sought answers to these questions by analyzing the data set of the World Bank (2019).

Results suggest that, after almost four decades, 91.5% of the 164 countries or groups of countries included in the analysis were found to have improved their GDP per capita (not in the table). The GDP per capita improvements among these countries had ranged from 1.19% to 2,134% (mean: 157%), implying that, while some GDPs had multiplied several folds, others stagnated or had gone south.

Table 1 shows that the five countries with the largest increases in GDP per capita in 1980–2018 are China, Equatorial Guinea, Bhutan, Myanmar, and the Republic of Korea. Specifically, China had a phenomenal rise in its GDP per capita from US\$347 to US\$7,408—or a staggering growth of 2,134%. (In contrast, based on the same data set, the United States of America had only improved its GDP per capita by 91%). Additional findings (not shown in the table) suggest that, from 1980 to 2018, China’s GDP per capita grew by 8.52% every year on average.

The countries above are models for the rest of the world as governments continue to adopt proven ways of improving their economies and the quality of life of their citizens.

**Table 1**

*Five Countries With the Largest Increases in Gross Domestic Product per Capita, 1980-2018*

Countries	GDP per capita (in US dollars)		Absolute increase	Percentage increase
	1980	2018		
1. China	347	7,755	7,408	2,134
2. Equatorial Guinea	659	10,602	9,943	1,508
3. Bhutan	406	3,173	2,767	682
4. Myanmar	206	1,572	1,366	663
52. Republic of Korea	3,699	26,761	23,062	623

## Reference

The World Bank. (2019). *GDP per capita*. Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD>

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# Countries With the Largest Increases in Out-of-Pocket Health Expenditures in the World, 2000-2016

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Health affects the lives of people in innumerable ways, but unfortunately, it is not always accessible to and achievable by all. Although countries generally provide cost-free health services in the public sector, their resources often fall short of the requirements stemming from the public’s ever-increasing demand. Therefore, many citizens turn to private providers for their health needs using their own, or out-of-pocket (OOP), funds. Based on the 2000–2016 data sets of the World Bank (2019), we analyzed the trends of country-level OOP health expenditures and identified the five countries with the largest increases in OOP health expenditures.

Data indicate (not in the table) that 89.3% of the 224 countries or groups of countries included in the analysis were found to have increased OOP health expenditures from 2000 to 2016. The increase in the said expenditures had ranged from less than 1% to as high as 1,043% (mean: 160%), implying that the growth trajectories of the OOP health expenditures worldwide varied considerably.

Table 1 shows that the five countries with the largest increases in the OOP health expenditures in 2000–2016 are Myanmar, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Tuvalu, and Armenia. At the top of the list is Myanmar, where its OOP health expenditure of US\$18.8 in 2000 had grown to US\$215.4 after 16 years—or at a rate of 1,043%. (In the context of Myanmar’s gross domestic product per capita of US\$1,500, US\$215.4 is a major financial burden to its citizens). Among the remaining countries shown in the table, their OOP health expenditures had grown by at least 531%.

The preceding discussion illustrates that, globally, the citizens have been spending more on health services. The growth in their health expenditures could mean, among others, that more of them are getting sick, more of them are experiencing major illnesses, or more of them are utilizing health services of the private sector. OOP health expenditures have implications for countries that are aiming to provide universal health care to their citizens.

**Table 1**

*Five Countries With the Largest Increases in Out-of-Pocket Health Expenditures, 2000-2016*

Countries	Out-of-pocket expenditure (in US dollars)		Absolute increase	Percentage increase
	2000	2016		
1. Myanmar	18.8	215.4	196.5	1,043
2. Azerbaijan	103.5	941.5	838.1	810
3. Belarus	52.7	412.2	359.4	681
4. Tuvalu	0.61	4.0	3.38	546
5. Armenia	112.1	707.2	595.0	531

## Reference

The World Bank. (2019). *Out-of-pocket expenditure per capita*. Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.OOPC.PP.CD>.