

# Chinese confident of annual income rises: report

More than 50 percent of people are optimistic about their incomes increasing in 2017, with rural people expressing more confidence than their urban counterparts, according to a recent survey report.

About 55 percent respondents in rural areas believe that their annual income will rise in 2017, compared to 53.4 percent people in urban areas, according to the report released by the China Central Television, which surveyed 570,000 people.

China has implemented favorable policies to help reduce the rural-urban income gap. In 2016, China lifted 12.4 million people out of poverty.

The report said people in ten provincial-level regions were most confident of increased annual income: Qinghai, Tibet, Hainan, Jilin, Ningxia, Anhui, Shandong, Shaanxi, Guizhou and Chongqing, all regions where a large number of poverty alleviation projects are located.

People with annual family revenues below 10,000 yuan (1,449 U.S. dollars) tended to focus on relocating projects, vocational education and small loans as a way of escaping poverty.

The survey hopes its results will provide valuable reference for national policies.

The report said that happiness did not arise from high income. People with family income exceeding 1 million yuan did not feel happier than those with income between 80,000 to 120,000.

In first-tier cities, education and entertainment were the top choices for people to spend money, according to the report.

The report also showed that people who have a partner feel happier than those who are single. People with partners but who were yet to marry were happiest.

Nearly 80 percent of young people interviewed said that they liked to live in good quality rented apartments with stable rental periods.

Tourism, digital products, and household appliances were the top three expected purchases in 2017, with tourism the top choice for the last three years, the report said.

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# Organ donor numbers surge

Nearly 220,000 people have registered themselves as organ donors in China, and the number is expected to increase rapidly with the help of internet technologies, according to the China Organ Donation Administrative Center.

The number of people who have registered to become volunteers for organ donation in China reached 219,365 on Monday, up from 66,000 on March 20, Hou Fengzhong, deputy director of the center, said on Tuesday.

On Monday, guided by Chen Jingyu, a leading lung transplant surgeon from Jiangsu province and a deputy to the National People's Congress, Shen Jinjin, a public health expert and an NPC deputy from Jiangsu, registered online to become an organ donor, with the whole process taking less than a minute.

Shen said that, as a doctor, his "biggest wish is to see more donors, so patients waiting for organ transplants don't die while they are waiting due to a lack of organs".

The number of organ donation volunteers has increased rapidly in the past few years due to the use of internet technologies, according to the China Organ Transplantation Development Foundation.

The foundation cooperated with Alipay, the online payment platform of Chinese e-commerce company Alibaba, meaning that since Dec 22, real-name users of Alipay have been able to register to become organ donors on the payment platform in just 10 seconds, said Zhao Hongtao, deputy secretary-general of the foundation.

In two and a half days, more than 86,200 people registered to become donors, which is equivalent to the total number of registrations for the previous two years, Zhao said.

Registering to become a donor volunteer does not mean people are obliged to donate their organs after death, and they can cancel their registration any time at their will, the foundation said.

Huang Jiefu, a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee and chairman of the China National Organ Donation and Transplantation Committee, said the concept of organ donation should be promoted using internet technologies.

"Such methods can help promote the idea of organ donation among the public, particularly the younger generation, who are major internet users," Huang said.

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## [NPC deputy proposes longer fishing ban to protect ocean resources](#)



NPC Deputy Mai Kangsen, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering [Photo/China.org.cn]

NPC Deputy Mai Kangsen, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, has suggested extending the annual fishing ban among other measures to protect ocean resources.

He was speaking on the sidelines of the ongoing annual session of the National People's Congress in Beijing.

"Ocean resources are exhaustible. We have to recognize that, in order to protect ocean resources and make fishing sustainable, we have to have higher catch limits," he said.

He proposed further extending the fishing ban, slapping strict controls on the size of fish caught, and setting fishing quotas.

Based on scientific estimates, Mai said the annual catch from the shallow ocean should be set in a range between 3-6 million tonnes. However, China's current catch is more than 10 million tonnes every year, profoundly damaging the ocean ecosystem.

The fishing ban that China implements has been extended from three to four

months and was extended to the Huaihe River last year. This year, the Pearl River and Minjiang River are included for the first time.

The ban is enforced beginning June 1 every year and aimed at safeguarding fish during their breeding season and conserving fish stocks.

“Despite the extension of the fishing ban, there is still a great strain on ocean resources,” said Mai. “We should come up with stricter policies to restore resources.”

Although there will be added management costs, protecting ocean resources was a far more important consideration.

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## Budget Spring 2017

In the March 2016 budget the government decided to increase total public spending from £681 bn last year, to £694bn this year and to £706 bn next year. For 2017-18 we are going to need a higher total, given the pressures on social care, the NHS and schools budgets.

The argument over the budget is less about the need for some more spending on priorities than on how this will be paid for. Some of us say that as the Treasury will be able to report stronger revenues than the Autumn Statement there is no need to hike individual tax rates or find new taxes to impose. Indeed, some selective cuts in rates on enterprise would be welcome, and likely to augment the revenues. Mr Osborne’s Spring budget last year slashed property transactions with higher Stamp Duties. The revaluation of Business rates will damage some smaller businesses that face high increases with no small premises exemptions.

It is most important that the budget promotes growth, investment and more productive working, rather than taxing it more. Treasury officials are ever minded to look for new sources of income, but the Ministers are there to protect taxpayers and to be a voice of commonsense about how far we can go with increasing tax rates. The UK economy has done relatively well in 2016 and so far this year, but could do better. It will need substantial new investment in broadband, water, electricity, and transport to overcome obstacles to growth and to lift it further. Anything the budget can do to speed these ideas, the better.

With the USA planning major tax cuts and with places like Ireland and Luxembourg also offering an attractive tax package to investors and business, the UK must stay competitive.

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# On International Day, UN calls for women's full participation in labour force

8 March 2017 – As the rights of women and girls around the world are being reduced and restricted, the United Nations today marked International Women's Day with calls for empowering and educating women and girls to reach gender equality in the work place.

In messages for the Day and events around the world, senior UN officials reflected on the significant impact of women's participation and contribution to the global economy, and international goal of reaching 50-50 equality in employment around the world by 2030.

Secretary-General António Guterres noted that leadership positions are predominantly held by men, and "outdated attitudes and entrenched male chauvinism" are widening the economic gender gap.

"Around the world, tradition, cultural values and religion are being misused to curtail women's rights, to entrench sexism and defend misogynistic practices," the Secretary-General said.

He underscored that denying women and girls their rights "is not only wrong in itself; it has serious social and economic impacts that hold us all back."

Closing the gender gap, for example, would add \$12 trillion to global gross domestic production (GDP) by 2025.

In her message, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director, decried the lack of opportunities for women and girls, saying "too many women and girls spend too many hours on household responsibilities."

She called for construing a different world of work for women: "As they grow up, girls must be exposed to a broad range of careers, and encouraged to make choices that lead beyond the traditional service and care options to jobs in industry, art, public service, modern agriculture and science,"

This change needs to start at home and in the first days of school, and include adjustments in parenting, curricula, educational settings and cultural stereotypes propagated in entertainment and advertising.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka said women and girls must be ready to be part of a digital revolution and study science, technology and math if they are to compete successfully for high-paying new jobs.

In her message, the head of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said equality lies in destroying stereotypes. It "lies in ridding the media and collective imagination of prejudice by

highlighting the women scientists, artists and politicians who are moving humanity forward in all fields,&#8221 Irina Bokova said.

She called on governments to invest in education and training, and allowing women to exercise their own choices when it comes to their bodies and their lives &#8211 just as men do.

&#8220Everywhere, women and men are determined to change things, to denounce discrimination and demand genuine equality, and we must support and accompany them,&#8221 said Ms. Bokova.