

Billionaire Usmanov Still Russia's Richest Man

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Alisher Usmanov at the 2013 World Fencing Championships in Budapest. **Marie-Lan Nguyen**

Alisher Usmanov retained his title as Russia's richest businessman in 2013 with a net worth of \$20.2 billion, according to a Bloomberg ranking of the world's 200 wealthiest persons.

Usmanov, whose fortune grew by \$1.3 billion last year, qualified as the world's 36th richest person in the ranking, which also saw 10 other Russian moguls qualify for the list. That statistic put Russia in second place in terms of countries with the most billionaires, second only to the U.S., which topped the list by a wide margin of 37 billionaires out of the top 100.

Usmanov built up his fortune through successful investments in iron ore producers, telecommunication companies, and internet firms like Facebook and Twitter. He served a spell in prison in Uzbekistan in the 1980s, but was cleared of the charges in 2000 by Uzbekistan's Supreme Court on grounds that the accusations against him had been false.

According to an earlier ranking by Forbes magazine, Usmanov also qualified as Russia's most charitable businessman, with about \$150 million worth of donations in 2012, for which he was awarded one of Russia's highest civil awards in recognition of his philanthropic activities by President Vladimir Putin in July 2013.

Co-owner of retail chain Magnit Sergei Galitsky was named the most successful Russian businessman last year having earned \$5.3 billion which brought his combined assets to \$13.8 billion.

Microsoft founder and CEO Bill Gates kept his top ranking as the world's richest person. He earned \$15.8 billion last year bringing his total wealth to \$78.5 billion. Microsoft shares increased in value by 40 percent in 2013.

Gates thereby toppled Mexican media magnate Carlos Slim, who had held the ranking's top position until May, Bloomberg said.

Brazilian businessman Eike Batista, whose oil company OGX filed for bankruptcy in October, won the dubious honor of having suffered the greatest financial loss during the year. Batista's net worth declined more than \$12 billion, causing him to lose his ranking as the world's eighth richest person.

Last year was one of the best for the world's 300 richest persons, who saw their combined assets grow \$524 billion to a staggering \$3.7 trillion, Bloomberg Billionaire's Index said.

Analysts believe that the new year will look equally bright for the super-wealthy.

"The rich will get even richer in 2014," the founder of real estate and energy conglomerate, Red Apple Group, John Catsimatidis said.

"Loan rates will stay low, the share market will continue to grow, [annual] economic growth will be about 2 percent," he predicted.

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