

Consumer Spending Habits - China - April 2013

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China's consumers' spending habits are changing as rapidly as the country's economy is growing. Improved availability of products and services and developments within the retail environment are leading to a shift in consumer lifestyles and spending habits.

In this report we answer the key questions:

Definition

This report covers the spending habits of consumers in the People's Republic of China.

Sitting below the middle class are those now considered xiaokang (or "comfortable") who hope to move up into the middle class. Their annual household income level would be approximately US\$3,600-US\$9,000 (RMB22,500-RMB56,000). This group represents about 70% of all urban households.

The Chinese middle class are defined as those people who are urban, invariably white collar workers and have an annual household income of between approximately US\$9,000-US\$30,000 (RMB56,000-RMB187,000). This equates to an estimated 30 million households in China – that's approximately 13.5% of all urban households in China. Given that a household (thanks to the one-child policy) is typically mum, dad and a Little Emperor, this makes the middle class number roughly 100 million people. With current wage growth, urbanisation and inflation of living costs, Mintel expects the number of middle class households to comfortably break the 35 million mark by 2015 – making approximately 15% of urban Chinese households middle class by then.

Methodology

For the purpose of this report, Mintel commissioned a quantitative research survey carried out online to explore spending habits among consumers aged between 20 and 49.

Fieldwork was conducted in February 2013, in four tier one cities, three tier two cities and three tier three cities of 3,000 consumers aged 20+. The tier one cities are Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu. The tier two cities are Hangzhou, Tianjin and Kunming. The tier three cities are Nanning, Taiyuan and Quanzhou.

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