Women Billionaires

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WEALTH REPORT 2026. No1

Fathers, Widows, and the Rise of European Women’s Capital

A structural study of Europe's women billionaires — how their wealth was built or inherited, and how actively each woman governs the fortune that carries her name.

UNIVERSE	COMBINED WEALTH	OWNER	SOURCE
146 women, 17 countries	$784.5B, fully valued	Research & Insights	Forbes Billionaires

00 · HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

One dataset, two questions

This edition covers the full Forbes 2025/2026 European universe: **146 named women across 17 countries**, each with a valued net worth and both codes assigned.

Sections 01–02 present the aggregate picture. Section 03 profiles the active builders by name. Section 04 draws out the cross-cutting findings. Section 05 sets the dataset against a decade of European and global growth. The appendix is the complete 146-name directory, ordered by net worth.

01		**Overview** Universe, geography & wealth scale	→ 146 women, 17 countries
02		**Source of Wealth** Inheritance paths—father, husband, self-made	→ FATHER dominates at 75.3%
03		**Involvement** Board, executive, family office & passive investor	→ BOARD leads at 37.7%
04		**Key Insights** Patterns, cross-cuts & structural takeaways	→ six findings
05		**Global Context** Europe vs. global growth, 2016–2026	→ EU women 73 → 146
A		**Appendix — Directory** 146 full profiles, coded and sourced	→ full listing, by net worth

INVOLVEMENT LEVEL IN THE BUSINESS (INV) — CODE KEY

EXEC Active executive
BOARD Board / governance
FAMOFF Family office
PASS Passive shareholder
UNK Unknown / insufficient data

SOURCE OF WEALTH (SOW) — CODE KEY

FATHER Inherited from father
HUSBAND Widowhood
MOTHER Inherited from mother
SELF Self-made
COFOUND Co-founded w/ husband
SIBLING Inherited from sibling

SECTION 01 · OVERVIEW

Universe, geography & scale

Forbes Billionaires 2016/2026 — European women billionaires, sized and mapped before we look at how the wealth was built.

THE DATASET AT A GLANCE

146	17	$785B	60.6
Women billionaires, fully named	Countries represented	Combined net worth — all 146 valued	Average age (range 26– 91)

48.6% of the 146 women entered the Forbes list since 2020, reflecting rapid wealth crystallisation through inheritance and valuation events.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION - FULL DIRECTORY BY COUNTRY

39% Germany alone accounts for 57 of the 146 women — the single largest national cluster

38 Women from Southern Europe (Italy + Spain + Greece)

12 Swiss residents — reflecting major private wealth concentration

12 Swedish residents — the Nordics' largest single share

146-NAME DIRECTORY — COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

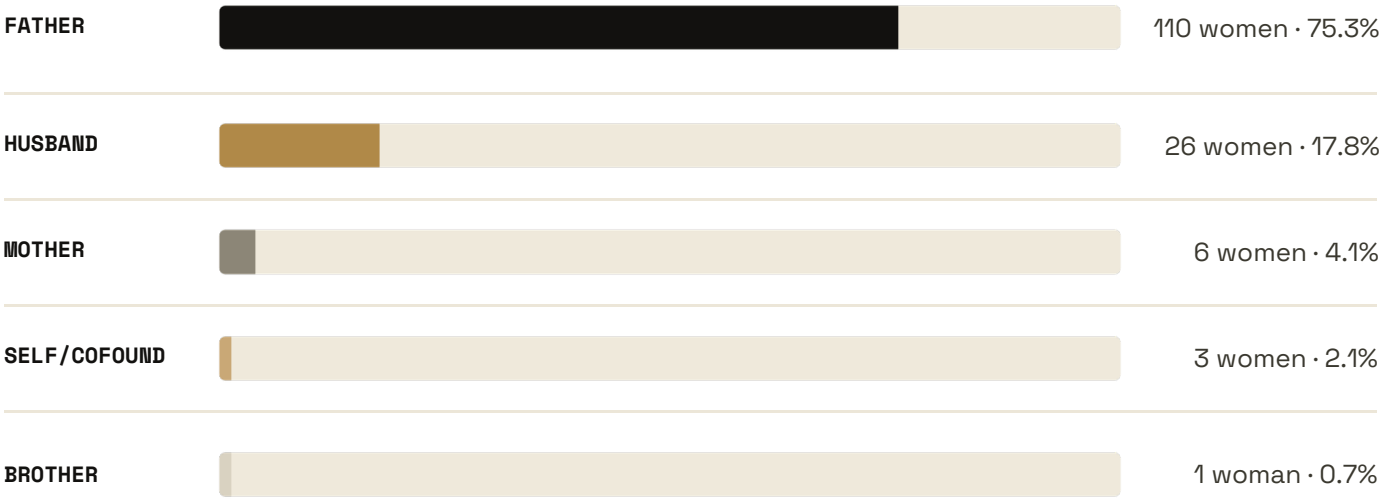
Germany	57
Italy	24
Switzerland	12
Sweden	12
France	9
Spain	9
Greece	5
United Kingdom	4
Norway	4
Denmark	2
Belgium	2
Czech Republic	1
Netherlands	1
Portugal	1
Finland	1
Poland	1
Cyprus	1

SECTION 02 · SOURCE OF WEALTH

Inheritance paths

How each woman's primary wealth was originally generated — father, husband, mother, or her own hands.

SOURCE OF WEALTH (SOW) DISTRIBUTION — 146 WOMEN



FATHER — 110 WOMEN

Dominant pattern across every country in the dataset — the default path to European female wealth.

HUSBAND — 26 WOMEN

Widows of self-made men who built industrial empires — the second-largest path in the dataset.

SELF/COFOUND — 3 WOMEN

Entirely self-made billionaires — rare enough to profile individually below.

SELF-MADE / CO-FOUNDER — 3 WOMEN

1 **Rafaela Aponte-Diamant** — SWITZERLAND · $44.5B
Co-founded MSC with her husband in 1970 — now the world's #1 container shipping line.

2 **Denise Coates** — UK · $8.1B
Bet365 founder — built the online betting operator from scratch.

3 **J.K. Rowling** — UK · $1.2B
Harry Potter creator — built a literary and licensing empire from a single manuscript..

SECTION 03 · INVOLVEMENT LEVEL IN BUSINESS

Board, executive, family office, passive

How actively each woman participates in the entity that holds her wealth today.

38%	36%	15%	9%	2%
BOARD OF DIRECTORS · 55 WOMEN	PASSIVE INVESTOR · 53 WOMEN	PARTICIPATES THROUGH HER FAMILY OFFICE · 22	HOLDS EXECUTIVE ROLE IN HER BUSINESS · 13	NOT IDENTIFIED FOR THE EXACT ROLE · 3

In 2026, European women billionaires' involvement in their businesses splits into two dominant patterns: 38% sit on the board of directors, while 36% remain passive shareholders with no role in decision-making. Together these two poles account for nearly three-quarters of all women billionaires analyzed — heiresses tend toward formal governance or none at all, with little middle ground of family-office allocation or hands-on executive control.

The remaining quarter splits between taking the family office role (15%) — women who channel their stake through a family office or foundation rather than the operating company itself — and managers of their own businesses (9%), the small group who run the business day-to-day; together they show that direct involvement, whether financial or operational, is the exception rather than the rule.

SOURCE OF WEALTH × INVOLVEMENT

SOW	BOARD	EXECUTIVE	FAMILY OFF.	PASSIVE	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
FATHER (110)	43	11	10	43	3	**110**
HUSBAND (26)	9	0	9	8	0	**26**
MOTHER (6)	3	0	2	1	0	**6**
SELF / COFOUND (3)	0	2	1	0	0	**3**
BROTHER (1)	0	0	0	1	0	**1**

14%

Of inherited-wealth women hold executive roles — vs 100% of the two self-made women.

39%

Of FATHER-source women serve on a board — the single most common governance path.

35%

Of HUSBAND-source women take on a family office role — foundation or investment holding.

SECTION 04 · KEY INSIGHTS

Six structural findings

Patterns and cross-cuts that recur across the full 146-woman dataset.

01

Paternal inheritance dominates

75% of European women billionaires inherited wealth from their father. The self-made billionaire remains exceptional.

02

Germany is structurally dominant

39% of the dataset is German — reflecting Mittelstand density: private industrial dynasties producing multiple heirs.

03

Governance is split evenly

BOARD role holders (38%) and Passive Investors (36%) together account for nearly three-quarters of European women billionaires. Most heiresses either sit on a board or remain fully passive — rarely in between.

04

Executive pathway is a father-daughter story

11 of 13 European women billionaires in 2026 in executive role in their business inherited from their father. Fathers are more likely to pass on operational control than husbands or mothers.

05

Rapid wealth entry since 2020

48.6% of all 146 women entered the Forbes list post-2020, driven by COVID-era valuations, inheritance crystallisation and IPO events.

06

Widowhood outweighs divorce

Wealth from husbands arrives almost entirely through widowhood (17.8%), not divorce settlement — a distinction that we tracked deliberately.

SECTION 05 · GLOBAL CONTEXT

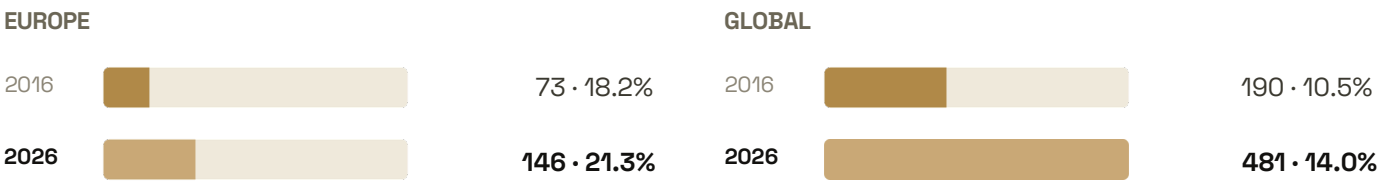
A decade of growth, 2016–2026

Europe against the global picture—total billionaire counts and the women's share of each, ten years apart.

TOTAL BILLIONAIRES — EUROPE VS. GLOBAL



WOMEN BILLIONAIRES — EUROPE VS. GLOBAL



2.0×

European women billionaires roughly doubled (73 → 146) in a decade — outpacing Europe's overall billionaire growth of 1.71×.

18.2% → 21.3%

Women's share of Europe's billionaire population rose over the decade — a structural gain, not just headcount growth.

Ahead of global

Europe's female share (21.3% in 2026) still runs well above the global rate (14.0%) — Europe remains the stronger market for women billionaires, though growing more slowly in relative terms (2.0× vs. global 2.53×).

APPENDIX A · DIRECTORY

146 European profiles

The complete Forbes 2026 European universe, coded and sourced. Ordered by net worth.

#	NAME · COUNTRY · INDUSTRY	NET WORTH	SOW	INV
1	**Francoise Bettencourt Meyers** France · Fashion&Retail	$100B	MOTHER	FAMOFF
2	**Rafaela Aponte-Diamant** Switzerland · Logistics	$44.5B	COFOUND	FAMOFF
3	**Susanne Klatten** Germany · Automotive	$29.7B	FATHER	BOARD
4	**Vicky Safra** Greece · Finance & Investments	$27.1B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
5	**Renata Kellnerova** CzechRepublic · Finance & Investments	$20.2B	HUSBAND	BOARD
6	**Beate Heister** Germany · Fashion & Retail	$19.1B	FATHER	BOARD
7	**Charlene de Carvalho-Heineken** Netherlands · Food&everage	$17.9B	FATHER	BOARD
8	**Antonia Ax:son Johnson** Sweden · Diversified	$14.8B	FATHER	BOARD
9	**Sandra Ortega Mera** Spain · Fashion&Retail	$13.2B	MOTHER	FAMOFF
10	**Francine von Finck** Germany · Finance&Investments	$12.3B	HUSBAND	PASS
11	**Nadia Thiele** Germany · Finance & Investments	$11.9B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
12	**Kirsten Rausing** Sweden · Food&everage	$11.8B	FATHER	PASS
13	**Magdalena Martullo-Blocher** Switzerland · Manufacturing	$10.3B	FATHER	EXEC
14	**Carrie Perrodo** France · Energy	$10.2B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
15	**Marie Besnier Beauvalot** France · Food&everage	$9.9B	FATHER	BOARD

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146	75.3%	37.7%	$784.5B
Women billionaires	Paternal wealth source	Hold a board seat	Combined net worth

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16	**Massimiliana Landini Aleotti** Italy · Healthcare	$9.2B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
17	**Alexandra Schoerghuber** Germany · RealEstate	$9.1B	HUSBAND	BOARD
18	**Marie-Hélène Habert-Dassault** France · Diversified	$9B	FATHER	BOARD
19	**Sofie Kirk Kristiansen** Denmark · Manufacturing	$8.3B	FATHER	PASS
20	**Agnete Kirk Thinggaard** Denmark · Manufacturing	$8.3B	FATHER	BOARD
21	**Denise Coates** UnitedKingdom · Gambling & Casinos	$8.1B	SELF	EXEC
22	**Tanya Saadé Zeenny** France · Logistics	$7.9B	FATHER	EXEC
23	**Rahel Blocher** Switzerland · Manufacturing	$7.7B	FATHER	FAMOFF
24	**Maria Fernanda Amorim** Portugal · Diversified	$7.6B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
25	**Dona Bertarelli** Switzerland · Healthcare	$7.5B	FATHER	FAMOFF
26	**Maria Angelicoussis** Greece · Logistics	$7.5B	FATHER	EXEC
27	**Marisa Del Vecchio** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$6.8B	FATHER	PASS
28	**Nicoletta Zampillo** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$6.8B	HUSBAND	PASS
29	**Paola Del Vecchio** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$6.8B	FATHER	PASS
30	**Ulrike von Baumbach** Germany · Healthcare	$6.6B	FATHER	PASS
31	**Barbara Boehringer** Germany · Healthcare	$6.6B	FATHER	PASS
32	**Isabel Boehringer** Germany · Healthcare	$6.6B	FATHER	PASS
33	**Katharina von Baumbach** Germany · Healthcare	$6.6B	FATHER	PASS
34	**Renate Reimann-Haas** Germany · Fashion&Retail	$6.4B	FATHER	PASS
35	**Anna Viegener** Germany · Manufacturing	$6.3B	FATHER	BOARD

36	**Maria Del Pino** Spain · Construction & Engineering	$6B	FATHER	BOARD
37	**Sofia Högberg Schörling** Sweden · Diversified	$6B	FATHER	BOARD
38	**Märta Schörling Andreen** Sweden · Diversified	$6B	FATHER	BOARD
39	**Hortensia Herrero** Spain · Fashion&Retail	$5.6B	HUSBAND	BOARD
40	**Christiane Schoeller** Germany · Media&Entertainment	$5.5B	MOTHER	BOARD
41	**Margarita Louis-Dreyfus** Switzerland · Food&everage	$5.4B	HUSBAND	BOARD
42	**Maria-Elisabeth Schaeffler-Thumann** Germany · Automotive	$5.2B	HUSBAND	BOARD
43	**Julia Thiele-Schuerhoff** Germany · Manufacturing	$4.9B	FATHER	BOARD
44	**Miuccia Prada** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$4.8B	FATHER	BOARD
45	**Friede Springer** Germany · Media&Entertainment	$4.6B	HUSBAND	BOARD
46	**Anne Beaufour** France · Healthcare	$4.5B	FATHER	BOARD
47	**Anna Katharina Viessmann** Germany · Manufacturing	$4.5B	FATHER	BOARD
48	**Danielle Bellon** France · Service	$4.3B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
49	**Giuliana Benetton** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$4.2B	FATHER	BOARD
50	**Sol Daurella** Spain · Food&everage	$4.1B	FATHER	BOARD
51	**Catharina Claas-Muhlhauser** Germany · Manufacturing	$4B	FATHER	BOARD
52	**Catheline Perier D'Ieteren** Belgium · Automotive	$3.6B	FATHER	PASS
53	**Isabella Seràgnoli** Italy · Manufacturing	$3.6B	FATHER	BOARD
54	**Ursula Hutter-Schleicher** Germany · Manufacturing	$3.5B	FATHER	FAMOFF
55	**Eva Mariaucher-Haefner** Switzerland · Technology	$3.4B	FATHER	PASS

56	**Segolene Gallienne** Belgium · Manufacturing	$3.3B	FATHER	BOARD
57	**Caroline Hagen Kjos** Norway · Diversified	$3.3B	FATHER	BOARD
58	**Sophie Luise Fielmann** Germany · Manufacturing	$3.3B	FATHER	PASS
59	**Maritsa Lazari** UnitedKingdom · Real Estate	$3.2B	HUSBAND	BOARD
60	**Maja Oeri** Switzerland · Healthcare	$3.2B	FATHER	PASS
61	**Marina Berlusconi** Italy · Media&Entertainment	$3.2B	FATHER	BOARD
62	**Miriam Baumann-Blocher** Switzerland · Manufacturing	$3.2B	FATHER	PASS
63	**Selina Stihl** Germany · Manufacturing	$3.1B	FATHER	BOARD
64	**Katarina Martinson** Sweden · Diversified	$3.1B	FATHER	BOARD
65	**Sybill Storz (died)** Germany · Healthcare	$3B	FATHER	BOARD
66	**Gudrun Heine** Germany · Healthcare	$3B	FATHER	BOARD
67	**Christina Rohde** Germany · Technology	$3B	FATHER	UNK
68	**Lottie Tham** Sweden · Fashion & Retail	$2.9B	FATHER	PASS
69	**Lina Tombolato** Italy · Finance&Investments	$2.9B	HUSBAND	PASS
70	**Annalisa Doris** Italy · Finance&Investments	$2.9B	FATHER	EXEC
71	**Louise Lindh** Sweden · Diversified	$2.9B	FATHER	BOARD
72	**Maren Otto** Germany · Diversified	$2.8B	FATHER	PASS
73	**Gabriele Gebauer** Germany · Manufacturing	$2.7B	FATHER	BOARD
74	**Katharina Otto-Bernstein** Germany · RealEstate	$2.7B	FATHER	PASS
75	**Anna Angelicoussis** Greece · Logistics	$2.6B	HUSBAND	PASS

76	**Nicola Leibinger-Kammueller** Germany · Manufacturing	$2.6B	FATHER	EXEC
77	**Regine Leibinger** Germany · Manufacturing	$2.6B	FATHER	BOARD
78	**Karin Sartorius-Herbst** Germany · Healthcare	$2.5B	FATHER	FAMOFF
79	**Alessandra Garavoglia** Italy · Food&everage	$2.5B	FATHER	BOARD
80	**Yvonne Bauer** Germany · Media& Entertainment	$2.5B	FATHER	BOARD
81	**Katharina Andresen** Norway · Diversified	$2.5B	FATHER	BOARD
82	**Alexandra Andresen** Norway · Diversified	$2.5B	FATHER	BOARD
83	**Marianna Latsis** Greece · Diversified	$2.4B	FATHER	FAMOFF
84	**Christine Knauf** Germany · Construction & Engineering	$2.4B	FATHER	UNK
85	**Sylvia Stroeher** Germany · Fashion& Retail	$2.4B	FATHER	PASS
86	**Christiane Knauf** Germany · Manufacturing	$2.4B	FATHER	UNK
87	**Helena Dassault** France · Diversified	$2.4B	FATHER	PASS
88	**Alicia Koplowitz** Spain · Finance&Investments	$2.3B	FATHER	FAMOFF
89	**Carmen Daurella Aguilera** Spain · Food&everage	$2.3B	FATHER	PASS
90	**Natacha Nikolajevic** France · Diversified	$2.3B	HUSBAND	PASS
91	**Sabrina Benetton** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$2.3B	FATHER	BOARD
92	**Charlotte Soderstrom** Sweden · Fashion&Retail	$2.3B	FATHER	EXEC
93	**Madeleine Grogg** Switzerland · Healthcare	$2.3B	FATHER	PASS
94	**Ilona Herlin** Finland · Manufacturing	$2.2B	FATHER	FAMOFF
95	**Elisabeth Douglas** Sweden · Diversified	$2.1B	HUSBAND	BOARD

96	**Gerda Tschira** Germany · Technology	$2.1B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
97	**Marina Prada** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$2.1B	MOTHER	PASS
98	**Dominika Kulczyk** Poland · Finance&Investments	$2.1B	FATHER	BOARD
99	**Friederike Braun-Luedicke** Germany · Healthcare	$2.1B	FATHER	EXEC
100	**Eva Maria Braun-Luedicke** Germany · Healthcare	$2.1B	FATHER	EXEC
101	**Helena Revoredo** Spain · Service	$2B	HUSBAND	BOARD
102	**Maike Oberwelland-Height** Germany · Food&everage	$1.9B	FATHER	PASS
103	**Barbara Benetton** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$1.9B	FATHER	BOARD
104	**Barbara Berlusconi** Italy · Media&Entertainment	$1.9B	FATHER	BOARD
105	**Eleonora Berlusconi** Italy · Media&Entertainment	$1.9B	FATHER	PASS
106	**Gabriella Meister** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.8B	HUSBAND	PASS
107	**Carmen Riu Guell** Spain · Service	$1.8B	FATHER	BOARD
108	**Monica Crippa** Italy · Manufacturing	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
109	**Ulrike Meister** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
110	**Karin Schick** Germany · Technology	$1.8B	FATHER	FAMOFF
111	**Pia Hollweg-Vajen** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
112	**Anna Maria Braun** Germany · Healthcare	$1.8B	FATHER	EXEC
113	**Johanna Braun** Germany · Healthcare	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
114	**Stephanie Haas** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
115	**Franziska Wuerbser** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS

116	**Laura Diehl** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
117	**Carla Diehl** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
118	**Mariarosa Lavelli** Italy · Manufacturing	$1.8B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
119	**Margarita Latsis Catsiapis** Greece · Diversified	$1.8B	FATHER	PASS
120	**Helene Odfjell** Norway · Construction & Engineering	$1.7B	FATHER	BOARD
121	**Annika Bootsman Kleberg** Sweden · Logistics	$1.6B	MOTHER	BOARD
122	**Christina Flügel** Germany · Food&everage	$1.6B	FATHER	PASS
123	**Julia Oetker** Germany · Fashion & Retail	$1.6B	FATHER	PASS
124	**Carmen Thyssen** Spain · Manufacturing	$1.5B	HUSBAND	FAMOFF
125	**Sylvia Wedemeyer** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.5B	FATHER	PASS
126	**Jenny Lindén Urnes** Sweden · Manufacturing	$1.5B	FATHER	BOARD
127	**Cristina Green** UnitedKingdom · Fashion & Retail	$1.4B	HUSBAND	PASS
128	**Susan Carol Holland** Italy · Manufacturing	$1.4B	FATHER	BOARD
129	**Madeleine Olsson Eriksson** Sweden · Diversified	$1.3B	FATHER	FAMOFF
130	**Carolin Hachenberg** Germany · Automotive	$1.3B	FATHER	PASS
131	**Giuliana Caprotti** Italy · Food&everage	$1.2B	HUSBAND	PASS
132	**Evi Hager** Germany · Construction & Engineering	$1.2B	FATHER	FAMOFF
133	**Dorle Hager** Germany · Construction & Engineering	$1.2B	FATHER	PASS
134	**J.K. Rowling** UnitedKingdom · Media & Entertainment	$1.2B	SELF	EXEC
135	**Clelia Haji-Ioannou** Cyprus · Service	$1.2B	FATHER	PASS

136	**Veronica Squinzi** Italy · Construction& Engineering	$1.2B	FATHER	EXEC
137	**Michaela Herz** Germany · Finance & Investments	$1.2B	FATHER	PASS
138	**Marina Caprotti** Italy · Food&everage	$1.2B	FATHER	EXEC
139	**Simona Giorgetta** Italy · Construction&Engineering	$1.2B	MOTHER	BOARD
140	**Isabel-Ulrike Hager** Germany · Construction & Engineering	$1.2B	FATHER	PASS
141	**Nicole Grogg-Hotzer** Switzerland · Healthcare	$1.1B	FATHER	BOARD
142	**Catharina Mühleis** Germany · Manufacturing	$1.1B	FATHER	BOARD
143	**Daniela Grogg** Switzerland · Healthcare	$1.1B	FATHER	PASS
144	**Simone Maag de Moura Cunha** Switzerland · Healthcare	$1.1B	FATHER	PASS
145	**Rosanna Armani** Italy · Fashion&Retail	$1B	SIBLING	PASS
146	**Kristina Hollweg** Germany · Manufacturing	$1B	FATHER	PASS