

## Asia's world city

Hong Kong's high degree of connectivity, globally and with the Mainland of China, helps people and businesses achieve excellence in their chosen fields. With sound fundamentals, a strategic location, advanced soft and hard infrastructure and world-class talent, Hong Kong is Asia's world city – a place where people and businesses from around the world can connect with opportunities throughout the region.

### Unique opportunities

Under "one country, two systems", Hong Kong is a free port and open economy in the heart of Asia offering convenient access to vast markets in the Mainland of China and ASEAN.

- Hong Kong is the pre-eminent bridge between China and the world, and vice-versa. No other city offers the same level and sophistication of connectivity with the Mainland and global markets.
- Hong Kong is playing a pivotal role in national development strategies including the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and far-reaching Belt and Road Initiative.
- Mega-infrastructure projects such as the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) and the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) significantly enhance the efficient movement of people and goods within the Greater Bay Area and open up new opportunities in a market of more than 86 million people.
- A free trade pact with the Mainland (The Mainland – Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, or CEPA) provides tariff-free access to the Mainland for Hong Kong manufactures, and enhanced access for Hong Kong service suppliers (including wholly-owned foreign enterprises incorporated in Hong Kong).
- Hong Kong is the global leader in Renminbi business and the prime node of connectivity between the financial markets of the Mainland and the rest of the world.
- As a free and open economy and a welcoming, pluralistic society, Hong Kong is the perfect testing ground for businesses and start-ups to explore new opportunities in the Mainland, and for Mainland companies to expand their reach to new global markets.
- Enhancing Hong Kong's status as an international trade centre, tapping the opportunities in the eastward shift of global economic gravity and the high-quality development of our country.

### Trusted partners and systems

With the rule of law, a tried and trusted common law system and independent judiciary, Hong Kong offers security and peace of mind to people and business.

- The Basic Law preserves Hong Kong's common law system separate to the civil law-based system practised in Mainland China.
- Judicial independence is protected. The power of final adjudication rests with Hong Kong courts.
- The Government is clean, efficient and transparent.
- Global communications hub, with the free flow of news and information protected by law.
- Strong legal protection of property rights, intellectual property and data.

- Highly regarded law-enforcement agencies and a globally recognised anti-corruption commission.
- Low crime rate, one of the world's safest large cities.

### **World-class professionals and talent**

Hong Kong is among the world's most services-oriented economies, with services contributing over 90% of gross domestic product (GDP).

- Broad and deep pool of world-class professional and business services in finance, insurance, asset management, tourism, food and beverage, trade and logistics, architecture, design, marketing, healthcare, legal and dispute resolution, creative and cultural industries.
- Extensive legal services – About 11,000 practising solicitors, 1,600 practising barristers and about 80 registered foreign law firms under a common law jurisdiction. It is a highly effective and trusted place of arbitration and dispute resolution services centre. Hong Kong was ranked the third most preferred seat for arbitration worldwide in the latest 2021 International Arbitration Survey by the Queen Mary University of London. In terms of mediation, the Hong Kong Mediation Accreditation Association Limited (HKMAAL) has 1,755 general mediators, 247 family mediators and 55 family mediation supervisors as at July 6, 2023. Further, the CEPA Investment Agreement provides a Mediation Mechanism for Investment Disputes for settlement of investment disputes. Hong Kong currently has 2 CEPA designated mediation institutions and 19 CEPA designated mediators.
- Global node for highly specialised commercial and shipping contract work.
- Vibrant start-up and tech scene.
- 5 universities in World Top 100: Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024/ Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2024: HKU (35<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>), CUHK (53<sup>rd</sup>/47<sup>th</sup>), HKUST (64<sup>th</sup>/60<sup>th</sup>), CityU (82<sup>nd</sup>/70<sup>th</sup>) and PolyU (87<sup>th</sup>/65<sup>th</sup>).
- 3 EMBA programmes in World Top 25: Financial Times EMBA Ranking 2023: Kellogg-HKUST EMBA programme (No.1); CUHK Business School EMBA programme (No.23); HKU/Fudan MBA (International) programme (No.24). QS EMBA Rankings 2023 (Joint Programmes): Kellogg-HKUST EMBA programme (No.5); HKU /Fudan MBA (International) programme (No.18).
- InnoHK research clusters established at the Hong Kong Science Park have attracted over 30 world-renowned universities and research institutes from 11 economies to collaborate with local partners in setting up 28 research laboratories.
- Range of schemes to facilitate overseas and Mainland China talent to work and live in Hong Kong, including a Top Talent Pass Scheme, Technology Talent Admission Scheme, the Pilot Scheme on Facilitation for Persons Participating in Arbitral Proceedings in Hong Kong and a Talent List to support the development of a high value-added and diversified economy.

### **Transport and information hub**

Hong Kong is a global transport and information hub completely plugged into global markets and networks.

- World No.1 public transit system (Oliver Wyman Forum in partnership with University of California, Berkeley: Urban Mobility Readiness Index 2023).
- Hong Kong is within a four-hour flight of major Asian cities and a five-hour flight from half the world's population.
- Extensive cross-boundary links with Mainland China – road, rail, air and sea.

- Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) is one of the world's busiest airports for air cargo and passengers. In December 2023, , the HKIA connects to around 180 destinations by around 120 airlines. For the whole year 2023, HKIA handled 40 million passengers and 4.3 million tonnes of air cargo.
- Hong Kong Port is among the busiest and most efficient container ports in the world, handling nearly 14.4 million TEUs in 2023. Every week, over 300 international container vessel sailings connect to around 500 destinations worldwide.
- Hong Kong has sophisticated ICT infrastructure, including 12 submarine cable systems and nine satellites for communications. Several submarine cable systems will be ready in the coming years, enhancing the city's connectivity with other parts of the world.
- XRL connects Hong Kong to 73 short- and long-haul destinations in the Mainland's high-speed rail network.
- HZMB is the world's longest bridge-tunnel sea crossing, spanning 55-km across the Pearl River Estuary, opening up new opportunities in the western Pearl River Delta region.
- There are currently eight land-based control points serving cross-boundary passengers between Hong Kong and the Mainland, enhancing connectivity and facilitating the flow of people and business between Hong Kong and the Mainland.
- Easy Internet access: over 86,000 public Wi-Fi access points in the territory; mobile subscriber penetration rate of over 318%; household broadband penetration rate of 98%.

### **International finance and business hub**

Hong Kong is a leading global financial centre with deep and liquid capital markets, a fully convertible currency (HK\$) and free flows of capital, goods and information.

- Consistently ranked among world leaders in terms of stock market capitalisation, IPO fund-raising, asset management, banking and insurance.
- Fully plugged into global markets and trading cycles.
- World's largest centre for offshore Renminbi business, including RMB trade settlement, banking, bond issuance and product development.
- Stock Connect links the stock markets of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Shanghai; Bond Connect further improves financial connectivity between market infrastructures in Hong Kong and the Mainland; Cross-boundary Wealth Management Connect Scheme in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area enables residents in Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in Guangdong Province to carry out cross-boundary investment in wealth management products distributed by banks in the area.
- World's largest offshore listing venue for Mainland Chinese issuers, with over HK\$8 trillion raised since the first H-share listed in 1993.
- Hong Kong originates and intermediates two-thirds of Mainland China's inward foreign direct investment (FDI) and outward direct investment (ODI).
- Low and simple tax system. Profits tax of 8.25% on first HK\$2 million of profits of corporations and 16.5% thereafter; salaries tax of 15% on first HK\$5 million of net income and 16% thereafter. No inheritance tax, no capital gains tax, no GST or VAT.
- Actively promoting the development of fintech.
- Hong Kong ranked No.4 in the *Global Financial Centres Index* issued by UK-based Z/Yen and China Development Institute from Shenzhen in March 2024.

- Redoubling efforts to attract enterprises, particularly those related to Hong Kong's development as the "eight centres", including key enterprises in advanced technology, innovation and strategic industries.
- Developing a "headquarters economy" to attract enterprises from outside Hong Kong to set up headquarters and/or corporate divisions in Hong Kong, bringing in quality enterprises to explore the immense opportunities brought about by national and international dual circulation.
- Introducing a mechanism to facilitate companies domiciled overseas, in particular those with a business focus in the Asia-Pacific region, to re-domicile in Hong Kong.
- Expanding Hong Kong's global economic and trade networks to B&R markets, including ASEAN, the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa and promoting regional co-operation, while keeping close ties with European and American markets.

### **Safe, cosmopolitan and caring city**

Hong Kong, Asia's world city, is an open, cosmopolitan and pluralistic society that seamlessly blends east-and-west, new-and-old.

- A fair, safe and stable society with a welcoming environment.
- English is an official language and widely used in government, business, and law.
- Year-round calendar of world-class arts, cultural and sporting events and home to some of the world's largest trade fairs.
- Green and healthy: About 40% of Hong Kong is protected countryside with rich biodiversity. Abundant opportunities for family outdoor activities and leisure in country parks, urban gardens and surrounding waters.
- More than 50 international schools offering curricula from countries including those of Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the International Baccalaureate programme. .
- More than 130 initiatives in the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong 2.0 focusing on "Smart Mobility", "Smart Living", "Smart Environment", "Smart People", "Smart Government", "Smart Economy", "Use of I&T in Combating COVID-19" and "Smart Village Pilots".
- Hong Kong is a **caring member of the global society**, responding swiftly to international appeals for **humanitarian aid** in relief of disasters that occur outside Hong Kong. Under the Disaster Relief Fund (established in 1993), grants totaling HK\$2,250 million have been made to relief organisations/governments/authorities around the world, up to end-March 2023.
- In February 2023, Hong Kong sent a 59-strong search and rescue team to Türkiye's earthquake-hit Hatay Province. The team rescued four survivors and found six bodies under the debris.

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