

## Asia's world city at a glance

### Overview

With a cosmopolitan community of 7.47 million<sup>1</sup> people who enjoy the best of East and West, Hong Kong is Asia's world city.

Famous for its hard assets, such as skyscrapers, world-class infrastructure and superb transportation system, Hong Kong also has many soft appeals in the form of beautiful countryside, interesting islands, a rich cultural and events calendar and exciting sports events.

Hong Kong is ranked as the world's freest economy among 162 economies across the globe in Canada's Fraser Institute's *Economic Freedom of the World: 2020 Annual Report*.

Hong Kong welcomes talent, professionals and entrepreneurs from all over the world.

### One Country, Two Systems

On 1 July 1997 Hong Kong returned to the Motherland and became a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

- The National People's Congress authorises the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to exercise a high degree of autonomy, with executive, legislative and independent judicial powers, including that of final adjudication, in accordance with the provisions of the Basic Law.
- A free and open society where the rule of law is upheld by an independent judiciary.
- A clean, efficient administration and civil service.
- Free flow of information, freedom of expression and association as well as freedom of the press guaranteed.
- The fundamental rights of residents protected by law.
- Separate immigration, customs, police and anti-corruption authorities and jurisdictions.
- Hong Kong continues to actively participate, as a separate member, in relevant international organisations such as the World Trade Organization, the World Customs Organization and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation using the name "Hong Kong, China".

- As at April 2021, there were 63 Consulates-General, 57 Honorary Consulates and six Officially Recognised Bodies in Hong Kong.
- Chinese and English are official languages.

### On Top of the world

- Hong Kong people enjoy the world's longest life expectancies: In 2020, the expectation of life at birth was 88.1 years for females and 82.7<sup>2</sup> years for males.

### International Business Hub

- Free flow of capital, free trade, free market.
- No foreign exchange controls.
- Simple and low tax system.
- Level playing field – local and international companies compete on an equal footing.
- Prime location at the mouth of the Pearl River Delta (PRD).
- Hong Kong ranked fifth globally in the *World Competitiveness Yearbook 2020* published by the Switzerland-based International Institute for Management Development.
- One of the world's most service-oriented economies, with the service sector accounting for more than 90 per cent of GDP.
- Hong Kong has been among the top five global Initial Public Offerings (IPO) raising markets in the past decade, ranking first for seven out of the past 11 years in terms of IPO funds raised. In 2020, Hong Kong ranked second in the world, with funds raised amounting to about US\$51.6 billion.
- Hong Kong ranked the first for initial public offerings (IPOs) and mergers and acquisitions (M&As) activity, according to the *Global Transactions Forecast 2020* report by global law firm Baker McKenzie in conjunction with Oxford Economics.
- World's largest offshore Renminbi (RMB) liquidity pool. As at end 2020, RMB deposits and certificates of deposit in Hong Kong totalled RMB 757.2 billion.
- Hong Kong is an international aviation hub, international maritime centre and regional logistics hub. The Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) has been the world's leading

international cargo airport. In 2020, HKIA handled about 4.5 million tonnes of air cargo.

- Regional corporate and start-up hub – Hong Kong is home to more than 9,000 overseas and Mainland companies, including around 4,000 regional headquarters and offices, and over 3,300 startups operating in major public and private co-work spaces and incubators.
- Hong Kong ranked the third easiest place in the world to do business, according to the World Bank's *Doing Business 2020 report*.
- Hong Kong ranked second in the "Best Business City in Asia" category in the Business Traveller Asia-Pacific Awards 2020.
- Forbes' "*Best Countries for Business 2019*" survey ranked Hong Kong the third globally.
- Regional communications and broadcasting hub with world-class telecommunications infrastructure.
- Free flow of information – Hong Kong hosts more than 80 international media organisations including major broadcasters, newspapers and news agencies. Overall, about 80 daily newspapers, 557 periodicals and over 800 local and overseas television channels, including CNN International, BBC World, HBO, CNBC, and the Discovery Channel are available.
- 77 of the world's 100 top banks operate in Hong Kong.
- Intellectual property is strongly protected.
- Hong Kong hosts some of the world's biggest trade fairs, including those for electronics, watches and clocks, gifts, lighting, and jewellery.

### Green Hong Kong

- Hong Kong people cherish their green spaces, which serve as the city's "green lungs" as well as calming oases to relax and have fun. About 40% of the land of this territory is officially protected as country parks and special areas for nature conservation.
- Hong Kong is blessed with a huge diversity of flora and fauna – including over 3,300 species of vascular plants, 245 species of butterflies, 129 species of dragonflies,

<sup>1</sup>provisional figure as at End-2020

<sup>2</sup>provisional figure of 2020

193 species of freshwater fish, 115 species of amphibians and reptiles, over 550 species of birds, and 55 species of terrestrial mammals. The Chinese white dolphin and Romer's tree frog are just two of the rare species found in Hong Kong.

- Hong Kong is committed to building a greener living environment by improving air quality, promoting cleaner energy sources and reducing waste.

### Arts, Culture and Creative Industries

- With a wide selection of arts and cultural events from East and West, Hong Kong is becoming an international cultural metropolis.
- The West Kowloon Cultural District, a world-class integrated arts and cultural district – which will have a variety of arts and cultural venues – is taking shape on a 40-hectare site overlooking Victoria Harbour. Two performing arts venues, Xiqu Centre and Freespace, started operations in 2019. M+ and Hong Kong Palace Museum are expected to open at the end of 2021 and mid-2022 respectively.
- Hong Kong is a creative powerhouse with around 137,000 practitioners engaged in fields ranging from different professions of design and fashion design to printing and publishing, interactive games to animation and comics, advertising to architecture, and music to film and TV production.
- The Hong Kong Museum of Art has reopened after a major renovation and expansion. The total exhibition area has expanded by about 40 per cent to around 10,000 sq.m. The number of galleries have increased from seven to 12, including a 9-metre-high gallery, which can display large artworks.

### Heritage Conservation

Hong Kong is proud of its built heritage. The Government's policy is to protect conserve and revitalise historical and heritage sites and buildings through relevant and sustainable approaches. Hong Kong has 126 declared monuments, including historic buildings, ancient forts, rock carvings and archaeological sites.

### Infrastructure

Well-connected Hong Kong invests heavily in infrastructure to boost connectivity globally, with the Mainland and locally. These projects represent the vision for the city's long-term development.

They include:

- "One-hour living circle" – a combination of infrastructure and transport projects aims to greatly reduce travel time between Hong Kong, Shenzhen and other PRD cities.
- Capitalising on its unique advantages, Hong Kong is playing an important role in the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Belt and Road Initiative.
- A blueprint to expand Hong Kong's railway network up to 2031 envisages the implementation of seven new railway projects in an orderly manner.
- The Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link connects Hong Kong to the 37,900 km national high-speed rail network.
- The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge links the three major Greater Bay Area cities.
- The Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point is the 7th road-based crossing between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, with capacity to handle up to 30,000 passengers and 17,850 vehicles per day.
- The Kai Tak Cruise Terminal serves the world's largest cruise liners.
- The Energizing Kowloon East initiative is transforming Kowloon East into another core business district.
- HKIA's Three-Runway System is under construction to meet the long-term air traffic demand of Hong Kong. Apart from the future development of AsiaWorld-Expo, the SKYCITY project underway will help transform HKIA from a city airport into an "Airport City".
- A vibrant, connected, world-class harbourfront is being developed.

### Soft Appeals

- Convenient, compact, cosmopolitan city with stunning harbour, skyline and parkland vistas – Hong Kong's easily accessible countryside features hill walks and a unique geopark.
- Many interesting islands are just a short ferry trip from urban areas.
- World-class sports events held throughout the year.
- Vibrant cultural scene with world-class cultural performances, arts and drama festivals, art exhibitions and street carnivals.
- One of the world's safest large cities with a law-abiding community and a well-trained, professional police force.

- Good education facilities – 22 local degree-awarding institutions and over 50 international schools.
- Four universities ranked the world top 50 in the QS World University Rankings 2021 and two universities ranked top 10 in Asia University Rankings 2021 (The University of Hong Kong: 22<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology 27<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>, The Chinese University of Hong Kong: 43<sup>rd</sup>, the City University of Hong Kong: 48<sup>th</sup>).
- Culinary paradise with many restaurants, ranging from deluxe restaurants to modest noodle shops, featured in the *Michelin Guide to Hong Kong and Macau 2021*.

### Caring Society

- Comprehensive medical and welfare systems.
- Social security net for the less privileged and the elderly.
- 12 years of free education. About 80 per cent of young people have access to post-secondary education in 2019/20 academic year. The kindergarten education scheme has been implemented from the 2017/18 school year. Around 90 per cent of the half-day programmes of kindergartens joining the scheme are free while the school fees for whole-day programmes are at a low level.
- Statutory minimum wage.
- As at the fourth quarter of 2020, about 45 per cent of the population resided in public rental housing or subsidised sales flats.
- Pluralistic and inclusive society.
- Active and robust civil society.

