

Hong Kong & Mainland China News – Feb-2026

Fidelity expects China's GDP growth at 4.5 to 5 pc

by www.thestandard.com.hk

Feb 04, 2026

China's GDP growth is expected to stabilize around 4.5 to 5 percent this year, driven by manufacturing and diversification in exports, and a stable stock market, said Fidelity International's Asia economist Peiqian Liu.

Liu expects the fiscal deficit target to remain at 4 percent, and local government spending on building infrastructure will drive the aggregated 1 percent expansion of the augmented fiscal deficit.

Following the US Federal Reserve's potential easing of interest rates, Liu said the People's Bank of China would have more flexibility to stabilize domestic demand, particularly if the property downturn reaccelerates, and will remain cautious in managing currency as the US dollar weakens. She expects the PBOC to cut the interest rate one or two times by approximately 10 basis points each this year.

Stuart Rumble, head of investment directing in Asia Pacific at Fidelity International, said that given China's A-share market rose by around 20 percent last year, and the Hang Seng Index has been up by about 30 percent since then. The A-share market "looks appealing and is not fully priced out". He said while some sectors, such as semiconductors, are very expensive, there remain value opportunities, particularly in industrials and healthcare.

Rumble said geopolitical stability, enhanced government policies in tax and technology, and promising corporate earnings will drive international investors into Chinese stocks.

Gloria Leung

Hong Kong single-family offices inject over HK\$12b annually

by www.thestandard.com.hk

Feb 10, 2026

More than 3,380 single-family offices were in operation in Hong Kong by the end of 2025, injecting over HK\$12 billion annually into the local economy, according to a study released by the financial services and the treasury bureau, along with Invest Hong Kong on Tuesday.

This study, commissioned by InvestHK and conducted by Deloitte, received responses from 136 stakeholders in the Hong Kong family office industry and in-depth interviews were carried out with 21 professionals from this sector between October and December last year.

The number of single-family offices has increased by around 680 over the past two years, representing a growth of over 25 percent, data from the study showed.

Besides, the single-family offices operating in Hong Kong contribute approximately HK\$12.6 billion annually to the local economy through operating expenditures alone, and that they directly employ over 10,000 full-time professionals within their operations.

Additionally, the study noted that 60 percent of respondents plan to increase their investments in Hong Kong, while the rest plan to maintain their current allocations.

Hong Kong becomes the only region with zero reduction in holdings, reflecting an optimism that stem from Hong Kong's strong stock market performance last year.

The secretary for financial services and the treasury, Christopher Hui Ching-yu said that this continued growth reflects the tangible outcomes of the government's efforts in policy formulation and institutional development.

He added that the government will continue to pursue the development of the family office sector through a series of measures, including enhancing tax arrangements, implementing the new capital investment entrant scheme, and establishing the Hong Kong academy for wealth legacy.

Hui further noted that with the goal of assisting over 220 family offices to establish or expand in the city, related legislative proposals are planned for introduction in the first half of this year between 2026 and 2028.

The proposals include expanding the scope of qualifying investment for the preferential tax regimes offered to funds and single-family offices, covering such as precious metals, loans and private credit investments.

The director-general of investment promotion at InvestHK, Alpha Lau Hai-suen highlighted that , many overseas family offices had a strong interest in Hong Kong's institutional advantages and tax incentives when the team conducted promotional activities in Europe and Southeast Asia.

UAE central bank joins HK debt depository network to deepen financial co-operation and market connectivity

by www.thestandard.com.hk

Feb 12, 2026

The Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates has formally joined the Central Moneymarkets Unit - Hong Kong's core central securities depository for debt securities on Thursday, marking a major step forward in advancing market connectivity and deepening financial integration between the two regions.

This provides the CBUAE and investors in the United Arab Emirates direct and cost-effective access to Chinese Mainland's capital markets and financial assets, leveraging Hong Kong's established financial infrastructure.

The Governor of the CBUAE, H.E. Khaled Mohamed Balama said, " The CBUAE's membership in the Central Moneymarkets Unit enables access to Asian capital market and deeper engagement with other global financial centres, which supports diversifying investment opportunities for market participants in the United Arab Emirates, and reinforcing the country's role as a leading international capital market hub. "

The collaboration underscores Hong Kong's position as a leading offshore yuan business hub, and a premier gateway for international investors to tap into the broader China and Asia markets, said Hong Kong Monetary Authority chief executive Eddie Yue Wai-man.

In addition, the CBUAE and the HKMA conducted in-depth discussions covering several key areas, including cross-border debt capital market connectivity, developments in digital assets, tokenisation, and central bank digital currency, as well as the development of regulatory frameworks for stablecoins and supply chain financing.

HK steps up push to become global gold trading hub

by rthk.hk

Feb 20, 2026

The government on Friday said they will be making a full push to develop Hong Kong into an international gold trading centre, as the local economy continues to recover.

Speaking at an opening ceremony for the commodity's first trading day in the Year of the Horse, Undersecretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Joseph Chan, said the government aims to make the city a regional gold storage hub, with more than 2,000 tonnes of the precious metal within three years.

He said officials are also encouraging bullion dealers to set up or expand refining facilities in the city.

Chan added that the government has signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Shenzhen Municipal Financial Regulatory Bureau to support Hong Kong gold dealers.

He said authorities will also promote closer cooperation between Shanghai and Hong Kong gold markets, while a government-owned gold clearing system in the SAR is expected to begin a trial operation within this year.

The undersecretary also noted that economic growth has been consistent.

"With capital continuing to flow into the city, our visitor arrivals kept rising, overall exports and fixed asset investments performed well, and local consumption has stabilised, helping the real GDP grow by 3.5 percent in 2025."

HK economy grew 3.5% last year

by news.gov.hk

Feb 25, 2026

Announcing the 2026-27 Budget this morning, Financial Secretary Paul Chan said Hong Kong's economy grew 3.5% over the past year, allowing the Government to reinforce support for people and enterprises, backed by stable and high-quality development at a national level.

Introducing the Budget's theme – “Driving High-quality, Inclusive Growth with Innovation and Finance” – Mr Chan said 2025 marked a third consecutive year of growth, with further expansion of 2.5% to 3.5% forecast for 2026.

Describing the city's economy in 2025 as buoyant, he said external trade remained strong, with private consumption rebounding, and fixed investment accelerating.

Total exports of goods from Hong Kong grew by 12% in real terms, while exports of services rose by 6.3%. Visitor arrivals surged by 12%, with cross-boundary financial services and traffic recording sustained growth.

In terms of domestic demand, private consumption expenditure rose by 1.7%, reversing a downward trend from the second quarter of 2025. Overall investment expenditure grew 4.3%.

The residential property market saw increases in both prices and transaction volumes. Total transactions reached a four-year high of nearly 63,000 for the year, while property prices rose by 3.3% for the year, ending a three-year decline, and rental prices rose by 4.3%. Non-residential property transactions also rebounded, with declines in rentals and prices narrowing.

In the second half of the year, the labour market stabilised. In the fourth quarter, the median monthly employment earnings of full-time employees increased by 4.2% year on year, and the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 3.8%.

Meanwhile, inflation remained mild. Netting out the effects of the Government's one-off measures, the underlying inflation rate was 1.1% last year.

Mr Chan also remarked that the stock market delivered a “stellar” performance. The Hang Seng Index rose by 28% over the year, while daily turnover surged by 90% to an historic high of close to \$250 billion.

Bright prospects

Looking ahead, Mr Chan observed that global trade tensions have moderated and stated that the Chinese Mainland will be the key driver of economic momentum, providing firm support for Hong Kong, with a strong foundation being laid for the period of the 15th Five Year Plan.

He predicted that investments in artificial intelligence and other new technologies will continue to underpin trade expansion in Asia, and that market expectations of further interest rate cuts in the US will bolster confidence.

The finance chief said exports of Hong Kong goods and services are expected to sustain decent growth, while a stable labour market and rising household incomes will drive private consumption. He said improving business sentiment will boost asset markets and investments, but cautioned that the international environment remains complex and uncertain.

Forecasting growth of 2.5% to 3.5% in Hong Kong this year, Mr Chan said the Government anticipates further real terms growth of 3% on average per annum from 2027 to 2030. He added that inflation is expected to be moderately higher than last year, with the underlying inflation rate and the headline inflation rate reaching 1.7% and 1.8% respectively.

The financial secretary also outlined that Hong Kong intends to proactively align with the 15th Five Year Plan, better integrate with and serve national development, and continue to participate in developing the Greater Bay Area.

He said the current-term Government is committed to expanding economic capacity and enhancing competitiveness, expediting the development of the Northern Metropolis, driving growth through innovation and technology (I&T) and a focus on talent, and developing new quality productive forces tailored to local circumstances.

City to bolster finance hub status

by news.gov.hk
Feb 25, 2026

Financial Secretary Paul Chan today pledged to enhance Hong Kong's role as an international financial centre, while contributing to "accelerating China's development as a financial powerhouse."

Delivering his 2026-27 Budget, the finance chief said the Government will aim to consolidate Hong Kong's existing strengths, tap into emerging fields, strengthen market systems and risk control, and deepen financial co-operation across the Greater Bay Area.

With regard to advancing renminbi (RMB) internationalisation, Mr Chan highlighted that Hong Kong doubled the size of the RMB Business Facility to RMB200 billion earlier this month to support the wider use of RMB by enterprises and customers.

He said the Government will promote more convenient exchange quotations and transactions to reduce transaction costs, seek to attract more high-quality RMB issuers, and explore the formation of an offshore RMB yield curve. It will also strive to expedite the issuance of Mainland government bond futures in Hong Kong, the inclusion of real estate investment trusts (REITs) under mutual access arrangements and the provision of an RMB trading counter under the Southbound Stock Connect.

In terms of securities, Mr Chan said Hong Kong Exchanges & Clearing will consult the market on revisions to listing requirements for enterprises with weighted voting right structures, facilitating secondary listing of overseas issuers, and greater listing flexibility for biotechnology and specialist technology companies. It will also put forward proposals for T+1 settlement cycles and launch the uncertificated securities market regime in collaboration with the industry and the Securities & Futures Commission (SFC).

Moreover, the Government will introduce an enhanced regulatory regime for listed companies, providing specific guidelines for overseas companies seeking secondary listings in Hong Kong.

The financial secretary also mentioned that the SFC and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority are in the process of implementing the Roadmap for the Development of Fixed Income and Currency Markets and that an electronic bond-trading platform will be launched in the second half of this year.

In the area of asset and wealth management, Mr Chan said the Government will introduce legislation to enhance the tax regime with a view to attracting more family offices and funds. It will also enable the privatisation or restructuring of REITs, and amend the law to provide a stamp duty waiver for the transfer of non-residential properties into REITs seeking to list.

New horizons

Mr Chan highlighted work in various emerging sectors, including efforts to strengthen Hong Kong as a base for the establishment of Corporate Treasury Centres (CTCs). The Government will announce measure providing additional tax incentives and flexibility for CTCs. It also proposes to relax the criteria for stamp duty relief in relation to the intra group transfer of assets, and will introduce legislation whereby the new arrangements will apply retrospectively to instruments signed from today onwards.

The finance chief also outlined that the Government will introduce a bill this year to establish licensing regimes for digital asset dealing and custodianship service providers, while the first batch of licences under the licensing regime for fiat-referenced stablecoin issuers will be issued next month. The SFC will set up an accelerator to expedite market innovation in the digital asset market.

In the coming two years, the Government will amend the Inland Revenue Ordinance to implement the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Crypto-Asset Reporting Framework and its amended Common Reporting Standard.

Mr Chan outlined that the Government will continue to develop Hong Kong as an international gold trading market by exploring tax incentives for eligible institutions conducting gold trading and settlement in the city, and facilitating the establishment of an industry-led trade association.

Measures enhance HK's global status

by news.gov.hk

Feb 25, 2026

Financial Secretary Paul Chan announced in his Budget a series of policy initiatives to consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's status as an international trade centre, international aviation hub and international maritime centre.

Mr Chan noted that the Recommendations for Formulating the 15th Five-Year Plan support Hong Kong to consolidate and enhance industries with a competitive edge.

To consolidate and enhance the city's status as an international trade centre, he highlighted that Hong Kong has to expand its commercial and trade network through strengthening its role as the functional node for the Belt & Road Initiative.

The Government will collaborate with industry players to further develop the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Middle East markets, and explore the potential of Central Asia, South Asia and North Africa markets.

Meanwhile, the Government will forge more free trade agreements and investment agreements (IAs) and is exploring the signing of new IAs with Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

To further attract enterprises to set up in Hong Kong, last year's Policy Address announced that the Government would formulate preferential policy packages to promote industries and investment.

The Financial Secretary said the Government has formulated a preliminary framework, which would take into account a series of factors, including the enterprise's industry and its technology level, as well as the potential economic contributions and employment opportunities it can bring to Hong Kong.

Policy tools include land grant arrangements, financial subsidies and tax incentives. The preferential tax rates will be half-rate or 5%. The Government will introduce an amendment bill this year.

Mr Chan will also establish and chair the Advisory Committee on Tax Policy to gather views widely from commercial, industrial and professional sectors, so that Hong Kong's tax policy can reinforce economic development.

In addition, the Government will set up a cross-sectoral professional services platform to bring together Hong Kong's professional services providers in the field of legal services, accounting, financial services, testing and certification, marketing, etc. to support Mainland enterprises in going global.

To promote further development of the exhibition industry and brand building as an international convention and exhibition hub, the Government will earmark \$100 million for attracting large-scale international exhibitions with new elements to Hong Kong through collaborating with relevant organisations on a pilot basis.

Its objective is to develop Hong Kong into the first-choice platform for showcasing Mainland and international brands, while attracting high-spending business visitors to Hong Kong and driving high value-added economic activities.

The Budget also outlined measures to support local enterprises and strengthen their competitiveness.

The Government will inject \$200 million into the Dedicated Fund on Branding, Upgrading & Domestic Sales (BUD Fund), raise the funding ceiling of “Easy BUD” to \$150,000 per application, and provide more targeted funding support for enterprises in artificial intelligence application.

The Hong Kong Export Credit Insurance Corporation will introduce a pilot scheme this year to provide protection for small and medium enterprises engaging in exports with higher-risk buyers.

Additionally, the Centre for Food Safety will waive the fees related to the certification of food products export for two years. The Government will also introduce a new unified brand for local agricultural and fisheries products in the middle of this year, supported by a certification, testing and traceability mechanism.

To further enhance Hong Kong’s competitiveness as an international aviation hub, Mr Chan highlighted that the Government will strive to enter into new air services agreements and expand traffic rights with regions demonstrating development potential, such as the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa and South America.

He noted that the new passenger departure facilities at Terminal 2 of Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) are scheduled to commence operations in May, which will substantially enhance the airport’s overall capacity.

In addition, the construction of the intermodal pier under Phase 1 of the HKIA Dongguan Logistics Park has been completed. The remaining works are expected to be completed within this year and targeted for commissioning in the first half of next year.

Hong Kong will also elevate its status as an international maritime centre, with the Government striving to promote smart logistics and digital transformation in the industry, while expanding the cargo hinterland to secure more transshipment cargo.

Mr Chan said the Government will launch the Future Innovative Logistics Acceleration Scheme this year to drive the transformation of the industry and enhance the interconnectivity of logistics data, with a view to increasing the competitiveness of the logistics industry and developing Hong Kong into an international smart logistics hub.

Meanwhile, the Government has reserved about 32 hectares of land in the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area for developing a modern logistics cluster and will invite expressions of interest from the industry for the development of the first site this year.

To further promote the development of high value added maritime services in Hong Kong, the Government will introduce an amendment bill in the first half of this year to enhance tax concession measures for the maritime service industry and provide a half rate tax concession to eligible commodities traders.

To consolidate Hong Kong’s premier position in ship registration, the Government will introduce an amendment bill this year to revamp the existing ship registration arrangements, including permitting a dual registration arrangement to cater for the diverse operating models of international maritime enterprises.

The Government will also provide port dues concessions for vessels powered by green fuel as well as those carrying green fuels to attract more vessels to bunker green fuel in Hong Kong. An incentive scheme will also be launched for green vessels registered in Hong Kong to encourage green transformation of Hong Kong fleets. All these involve government subsidies of around \$34 million. The Government will take forward a legislative amendment exercise this year to provide more anchorages for green maritime fuel bunkering operations.

The finance chief added that the Government will amend the relevant legislation within this year to extend the current arrangements under the Air Transhipment Cargo Exemption Scheme to other sea transhipment and sea-air transhipment modes.

Govt drives IP trading

by news.gov.hk

Feb 25, 2026

Financial Secretary Paul Chan proposed in his 2026-27 Budget today to refine the associated tax regime and institutional framework, nurture talent and leverage the city's strengths in professional services, with a view to boosting economic development through driving intellectual property (IP) trading and financing.

Delivering his speech this morning, Mr Chan said reducing costs will facilitate more relevant trading activities, which would be conducive to the development of knowledge-intensive industries and could reinforce Hong Kong's position as a regional IP trading centre.

He noted that the Government is consulting the trade on tax deduction arrangements for capital expenditure incurred for purchasing IP or the rights to use IP and plans to introduce an amendment bill this year.

In addition, the Government has earmarked \$28 million to support the Hong Kong Technology & Innovation Support Centre in providing innovation and technology (I&T) enterprises with patent evaluation based on Guobiao, and implementing the two-year Pilot Patent Valuation Support Scheme to assist I&T enterprises for conducting valuation of their patent assets.

The Intellectual Property Department, together with the Vocational Training Council, will roll out a two-year pilot programme and establish the Intellectual Property Academy to provide on-the-job training linked to the Qualifications Framework. The Government has earmarked \$52 million for the project, which is targeted to commence at the end of this year.

Highlighting another industry with a competitive edge, Mr Chan noted that the Department of Justice (DoJ) is preparing for the development of the Hong Kong International Legal Service Building as a new international legal hub landmark, which will be home to the headquarters of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy and international legal and dispute resolution services institutions, etc. The preparatory works will commence this year.

The International Institute for the Unification of Private Law will establish its Asia-Pacific Liaison Office in Hong Kong this year. Mr Chan pointed out that the DoJ will continue attracting international legal and dispute resolution services institutions to establish offices in Hong Kong.

To strengthen the promotion of mediation and arbitration services, the Government will strengthen the regulatory framework for accreditation and disciplinary matters of the mediation profession in Hong Kong and take forward the legislative exercise this year.