

## Hong Kong & Mainland China News – Apr-2026

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### **Hong Kong International Airport jets to 4th in Skytrax global airport rankings**

by [www.thestandard.com.hk](http://www.thestandard.com.hk)

Apr 01, 2026

Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) has climbed to fourth place in the 2026 Skytrax World Airport Awards, rising two positions from sixth last year.

Widely regarded as the “Oscars of the aviation industry,” the rankings are compiled by London-based aviation consultancy Skytrax, which evaluated more than 575 airports based on passenger surveys from over 100 nationalities. The assessment covers the entire passenger journey, from check-in and security to shopping, dining, and transit experience.

Singapore Changi Airport retained the top spot for the 14th time, recognized for its consistently high passenger experience.

The airport also won four additional awards, including World’s Best Airport Dining, World’s Best Airport in the 60–70 million passenger category, World’s Best Airport Immigration Services, and Best Airport in Asia.

All of the top five airports in this year’s rankings are located in Asia. South Korea’s Incheon International Airport rose to second place from fourth, while Japan’s Tokyo Haneda Airport and Narita Airport ranked third and fifth, respectively.

Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport placed sixth and was named Best Airport in Europe for the fourth consecutive year. Vancouver International Airport ranked 10th and was awarded Best Airport in North America.

Meanwhile, Hamad International Airport in Doha, which ranked second last year, withdrew from the awards amid ongoing disruptions linked to the Iran conflict.

In addition to its overall ranking, HKIA also received awards for World’s Best Airport Security Processing and World’s Best Airport Washrooms.

## **Hong Kong climbs to world's fifth-largest trading hub as resilience defies global challenges**

by [www.thestandard.com.hk](http://www.thestandard.com.hk)

Apr 03, 2026

Hong Kong has reclaimed its position as a top-tier global trade powerhouse, jumping two spots to become the world's fifth-largest merchandise trading entity in 2025, according to the latest "Global Trade Outlook and Statistics" report from the World Trade Organization.

The city's total merchandise trade surged by 17.5 percent year-on-year to reach a staggering US\$1,585 billion, representing 3 percent of all global commerce.

This performance places Hong Kong directly behind the mainland, the United States, Germany, and the Netherlands. If the European Union were considered a single bloc, Hong Kong would rank as the fourth-largest individual trading entity in the world.

The report further highlighted that the city now sits as the world's fifth-largest exporter and sixth-largest importer of goods, marking a three-place improvement in both categories compared to the previous year.

Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Algernon Yau Ying-wah expressed strong optimism regarding the findings, noting that the results prove Hong Kong's external trade remains robust despite the dual pressures of geopolitical tension and rising trade protectionism.

He attributed this success to the city's adherence to free trade principles and its unique institutional advantages under the "one country, two systems" framework, which allow it to serve as a highly agile gateway for regional business.

Yau also credited a suite of government initiatives—such as expanding economic networks, attracting foreign investment, and supporting small businesses—for enabling the city to play a pivotal role in the Belt and Road initiative and the opening of mainland markets.

The momentum from 2025 appears to have carried directly into the current year.

Early data for 2026 shows that the values of total exports and imports grew by 24.7 percent and 29.9 percent respectively in February.

When looking at the first two months of 2026 combined, exports have already risen by nearly 30 percent compared to the same period last year.

While merchandise trade saw the most dramatic gains, Hong Kong also maintained its standing in the services sector, ranking as the 22nd-largest commercial service trading entity globally with a total trade volume of US\$211 billion.

The business community has also welcomed the news, with Executive Council member and Vocational Training Council Chairman Jeffrey Lam Kin-fung describing the achievement as an inspiring reflection of the city's competitiveness.

He emphasized that as the country begins its 15th Five-Year Plan, Hong Kong is currently formulating its own five-year roadmap to align with national development.

Lam stressed that the city must continue to evolve its roles as a "super connector" and a "super value-adder," helping mainland enterprises expand globally while exploring new emerging markets to ensure Hong Kong remains an indispensable center for international trade.

## **Strong trading and economic growth in Q1: FS**

by [www.rthk.hk](http://www.rthk.hk)  
Apr 05, 2026

Financial Secretary Paul Chan on Sunday said Hong Kong's financial market performed well in the first quarter of this year and the city's real economy also showed improvements.

Writing in his weekly blog, Chan said the stock market saw active trading in the first quarter of this year, with the average daily turnover in the first two months exceeding HK\$260 billion – a 17 percent rise year-on-year.

He said the market became even more active in March, as daily turnover reached over HK\$300 billion – an increase of more than eight percent compared with the same period last year.

"This reflects that amid uncertainties, investors are increasing their asset allocation in Hong Kong, not only because they see the city as a reliable safe haven for their funds, but also because of the stable economic growth on the mainland and the large number of companies listing in Hong Kong, which provides them with numerous investment opportunities," he said.

The finance chief also said Hong Kong's IPO market continued its strong performance, raising over HK\$103 billion as of late March, ranking first globally.

The SAR has seen more than 500 listing applications, he added.

Meanwhile, Chan said Hong Kong also recorded improvements in exports and local consumption.

He said total retail sales in the first two months of this year rose by 11.8 percent year-on-year, marking the 10th consecutive month of growth, adding that the rate of increase was accelerating compared with the fourth quarter of last year.

Chan said the SAR also saw booming online sales, with year-on-year growth of 27.5 percent in the first two months.

*Edited by Tony Sabine*

## **HK's IPO market could be among top 3 in 2026: Deloitte**

by rthk.hk  
Apr 08, 2026

Accounting giant Deloitte on Wednesday forecast that Hong Kong's initial public offering (IPO) market could make the top three globally this year, with around 160 new listings raising at least HK\$300 billion.

The prediction came as the city has already seen 40 new listings raising HK\$109.9 billion in the first quarter of the year, five times the funds raised in the same period last year.

It also marks the best performance in five years both in terms of the volume of funds raised, and the number of new listings.

But speaking at a press conference, Edward Au, southern region managing partner at Deloitte China, warned that "the tide could change quickly" as the city also faces fierce competition with the Nasdaq and New York Stock Exchange.

"We've seen strong competition from the US, especially with the potential mega IPOs in AI and space [sectors].

"And if these deals go ahead, definitely, [the companies] could shift the global rankings quite easily," Au said.

"But that said, Hong Kong's strengths are not only about one or two 'blockbuster' deals, but also the deep and consistent pipelines, particularly from those Chinese and regional issuers," he added.

Au noted that while the latest geopolitical uncertainties arising from the Iran war have caused investors to be more cautious with investments in "risky assets", including IPOs, he believes that more funds might still flow into Asia due to the region's relatively safe environment, and as investors re-allocate portfolios.

He added that the firm forecasts that about seven companies that are currently seeking to list here might be able to raise at least US\$1 billion this year.

Separately, the number of mainland firms seeking to list in the US has plunged in the first quarter of the year, with only one company listing there, compared to the 21 seen in the same period last year.

*Edited by Aaron Tam*

## **HSBC and Anchorpoint Financial secure HK first stablecoin licences**

by [www.thestandard.com.hk](http://www.thestandard.com.hk)

Apr 10, 2026

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority announced on Friday that it has granted stablecoin issuer licences under the Stablecoins Ordinance to Anchorpoint Financial and The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation for issuing stablecoins in Hong Kong.

Anchorpoint Financial is a joint venture established by Standard Chartered Hong Kong, Animoca Brands, and HKT (6823).

HKMA is “open but cautious” about issuing more licences in the future, Daryl Ho, deputy chief executive at HKMA said at a press briefing, adding the number of additional licences would be “very limited”.

The authority received a total of 36 stablecoin licence applications last year.

In a statement, Anchorpoint said it was going to work with selected businesses to act as distributors to enable public access to its stablecoin.

HSBC’s stablecoin, meanwhile, will be available on the bank’s two mobile apps, namely PayMe and HSBC HK Mobile Banking, the lender said in a separate statement.

The bank plans to offer retail customers and merchants more flexible and secure options via stablecoins, it added.

Such services include peer-to-peer payments, customer-to-merchant payments, and tokenised investments.

HKMA Chief Executive Eddie Yue Wai-man said that the granting of stablecoin issuer licences is an important milestone for the development of digital assets in Hong Kong

The regulatory regime provides an orderly operating environment for stablecoin issuers to apply innovative technologies while ensuring robust user protection and effective risk management, which will foster the development of a healthy, responsible, and sustainable stablecoin ecosystem, he added.

"We hope their promotion of regulated stablecoins will address pain points in financial and economic activities, create values for both individuals and businesses, and support the healthy development of digital assets in Hong Kong," Yue noted.

Staff reporter and Reuters

## **HK can become second-largest IFC: Paul Chan**

by rthk.hk

Apr 15, 2026

Financial Secretary Paul Chan expressed strong confidence on Wednesday that Hong Kong will rise to become at least the world's second biggest international financial centre within the next 10 to 15 years.

"Look at Hong Kong now from the perspective of 10, 15 years later. I'm very confident Hong Kong, surely we will not be just number three in terms of international financial centre ranking, at least the second," he said.

Hong Kong maintained its third place globally and first place in Asia Pacific, according to a global ranking by Z/Yen and the China Development Institute from Shenzhen in March, trailing behind New York and London.

"And financial centre is not just about equities market. So we need to enrich our offerings. Apart from equities, fixed income, currency, also green finance, sustainable finance, and also important to us... family office hub," Chan said at the HSBC Global Investment Summit.

He also assured investors at the summit of the business opportunities that Hong Kong can tap into.

"I'm very confident about the growth of the mainland in the coming decade," he said.

Chan said rising incomes among mainland residents, coupled with their growing demand for overseas asset allocation, present tremendous opportunities for Hong Kong's asset and wealth management industry.

*Edited by Thomas McAlinden*

## China GDP growth beats forecasts on domestic demand

by rthk.hk

Apr 16, 2026

China's economic growth topped expectations in the first quarter, official data showed on Thursday, even as the global economy reels from the fallout of war in the Middle East.

Gross domestic product grew 5 percent year on year, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed on Thursday, with GDP reaching 33.4 trillion yuan.

The country has set the target for 2026 growth at 4.5 percent to 5 percent and will strive for better in practice, the bureau said.

On a quarterly basis, GDP grew 1.3 percent in the first quarter, matching forecasts and just ahead of the 1.2 percent gain in the final quarter of last year.

In the first quarter, "the growth of production and supply accelerated, market demand continued to improve, employment was generally stable, market prices picked up moderately, and high-quality development advanced with new and positive momentum," the bureau said in a statement.

"The national economy got off to a good start with the development showing greater resilience and vitality."

Deputy bureau chief Mao Shengyong told reporters at a press briefing that domestic demand contributed to 84.7 percent of GDP growth for the quarter.

He said the economy started this year on a good footing despite a complex and severe external environment, calling the achievement "rare and commendable".

The impact from volatile global oil prices has been relatively small on the world's second-largest economy, he said.

Retail sales of consumer goods, a major indicator of the country's consumption strength, expanded, on a year-on-year basis, 2.4 percent in the first quarter and 1.7 percent for March.

Value-added industrial output expanded 6.1 percent in the first quarter. The pace was 1.1 percentage points faster than the fourth quarter of last year.

For March, output was 5.7 percent, beating forecasts for 5.5 percent growth. On a monthly basis, industrial output grew 0.28 percent in March.

The industrial output is used to measure the activity of large enterprises with an annual main business turnover of at least 20 million yuan.

A breakdown of the data showed that the mining sector's value-added output increased by 6 percent year on year in the first quarter, while that of the manufacturing sector grew by 6.4 percent.

The value-added output of the electricity, heat, gas, and water production and supply sectors rose by 4.3 percent.

Fixed-asset investment went up 1.7 percent year on year in the first quarter to hit 10.27 trillion yuan, reversing the 3.8-percent decline recorded for the whole of last year.

Investment in infrastructure construction rose 8.9 percent from a year ago during the period, and manufacturing investment increased 4.1 percent.

Excluding the property sector, the country's fixed-asset investment rose 4.8 percent.

Investment in property development decreased 11.2 percent, with the floor space of newly-built commercial buildings sold being 195.25 million square metres, down by 10.4 percent.

The total sales of newly-built commercial buildings were 1.7262 trillion yuan, down by 16.7 percent.

The surveyed urban unemployment rate in China averaged 5.3 percent in the first quarter, maintaining the same level as a year ago.

Commenting on the data, Tianchen Xu, senior economist at Economist Intelligence Unit, said the robust growth came on the back of strong exports, which rose by 14.7 percent year on year in the first quarter, despite geopolitical uncertainties.

He dismissed concerns that the Iran war might weigh on the sector's growth, saying weak performance in March was due to delayed production at factories following the Lunar New Year holiday.

"The overall production cost is still relatively lower as the oil prices are rising across the world, which means firms in Southeast Asia, from Japan or South Korea, they are also grappling with the higher oil prices," he said.

"In relative terms, China's producers still have a very good access to all supplies, and they have the advantages of a lower cost in terms of labour, land, and lower credits. That means Chinese exports would remain highly competitive despite all turbulences."

Xu said the global energy shock would have a "moderate" impact on the world's second largest economy, as the country's energy and oil reserves can cope with domestic needs for around six months.

"China also has very diversified supplies - not only from the Middle East, but also from Russia, Brazil, and even from the United States and Africa. That will help sustain China's industrial sector," he said.

"But there will be some pressure on firms' profitability, as we can see from the latest inflation data, the producer prices rose quite a lot, but there haven't been much increases in consumer prices.

"That means factories and manufacturers were mostly absorbing the rise in the oil prices."

Xu forecast that the country's economy will grow by 4.6 percent year on year in 2026, noting that the latest quarterly data fell at the high-end of the country's annual growth target of between 4.5 percent and 5 percent, indicating positive signals.

(Additional reporting by Xinhua & Reuters)

*Edited by Thomas McAlinden*

## **HK's legal system, gateway to Mainland boost investor confidence**

by [www.thestandard.com.hk](http://www.thestandard.com.hk)

Apr 27, 2026

Hong Kong stands as a competitive global business hub – underscoring the city's strength as a great place to work - backed by its robust common law system, a business-friendly government, and targeted talent policies, all the while serving as a strategic springboard for businesses to access the Chinese Mainland and Southeast Asia, said Jeremy Sheldon, chair of the British Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

In an exclusive interview with The Standard, Sheldon said Hong Kong's lasting strength is its trusted common law system under the "one country, two systems" framework, which he believes gives international investors the confidence they need.

He added that the city's high level of autonomy allows for business arrangements not available in other markets.

With over 1,100 chamber members representing more than 300 companies in Hong Kong, the chamber has maintained close communication with the Hong Kong government to inform members of relevant developments and lobby on their behalf to support a competitive business environment.

Sheldon noted that the current government-business relationship is more critical than ever, reflecting a joint effort to navigate a complex global landscape and address the city's immediate challenges.

"As a consequence of that, you are seeing policies and actions by businesses that are responding positively to a number of the things the government is trying to put forward. Being able to have conversations, the more we understand the better and more effective we can be."

He highlighted the Top Talent Pass Scheme as one of several strategic measures for attracting global professionals, adding measures such as the extension of residential, commercial and industrial leases beyond 2047 have further strengthened long-term investment confidence.

The city's strategic development blueprints are drawing major international players in sectors such as private wealth, insurance, life sciences and healthcare. Sheldon revealed that two leading UK educational institutions are actively planning to set up campuses in the Northern Metropolis, where students will have the opportunity to learn in a world-class environment. This will help strengthen Hong Kong's position as a regional education and research hub.

Pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca is also expanding in Hong Kong under the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises' initiative to bolster the local life and health technology sector. It has opened a research and development (R&D) center in the city since late 2023 and hired more than 20 professionals.

Sheldon also highlighted a forward-thinking success story from one of the chamber's key members, Jardines. The group is collecting used cooking oil from its subsidiaries and converting it into B5 biodiesel fuel for Gammon's construction machinery.

In 2025, the initiative diverted 1.1 million liters of oil from landfills, covering around 97 percent of Gammon's B5 biodiesel needs, cutting emissions and reducing reliance on imports.

Hong Kong's dual role as a gateway for Chinese Mainland's GoGlobal strategy and a landing pad for international firms entering the Asia market further amplifies its allure. Sheldon cited Brompton Bicycle, a British manufacturer of folding bicycles, and Woodland Group, a logistics company, as firms looking to expand into the rest of Asia using Hong Kong as a foothold.

While investors continue to value the city's deep markets and liquidity, Sheldon cautioned that maintaining this competitive edge requires constant adaptation to shifting global capital flows and regional competition.

Meanwhile, Sheldon noted that Hong Kong's first five-year plan, to be aligned with the national 15th Five-Year Plan, would further reinforce stability, a top priority for businesses worldwide.

"In uncertain and difficult times, stability and certainty are needed. And I think plans of this nature, which have stood the test of time, in China and elsewhere, give that stability and that confidence," he said.

Looking ahead, the chamber will build on this momentum of confidence and connectivity with three events planned in the coming weeks to shape Hong Kong's next phase of growth. The 5th Business Forum will translate the China GoGlobal policy into practice, the 2026 Future Leaders Hackathon will highlight the city's ability to nurture top talent, while the 6th Business Forum is set to explore how the Northern Metropolis can drive fresh economic growth and deeper integration with the Greater Bay Area.

"I think it can be said that some of Hong Kong's best days are ahead of it, provided we remain proactive. Positivity must be paired with a clear-eyed commitment to tackling our remaining hurdles so that this enthusiasm translates into sustained growth."