In general, information available as of 1 January 2003 was used in the preparation of The World Factbook 2003.

This page was last updated on 18 December, 2003.
Background: Occupied by the UK in 1841, Hong Kong was formally ceded by China the following year; various adjacent lands were added later in the 19th century. Pursuant to an agreement signed by China and the UK on 19 December 1984, Hong Kong became the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China on 1 July 1997. In this agreement, China has promised that, under its "one country, two systems" formula, China's socialist economic system will not be imposed on Hong Kong and that Hong Kong will enjoy a high degree of autonomy in all matters except foreign and defense affairs for the next 50 years.

Geography

Location: Eastern Asia, bordering the South China Sea and China

Geographic coordinates: 22 15 N, 114 10 E

Map references: Southeast Asia

Area: 
- total: 1,092 sq km
- water: 50 sq km
- land: 1,042 sq km

Area - comparative: six times the size of Washington, DC

Land boundaries: 
- total: 30 km
- border countries: China 30 km

Coastline: 733 km

Maritime claims: 
- territorial sea: 3 NM

Climate: tropical monsoon; cool and humid in winter, hot and rainy from spring through summer, warm and sunny in fall

Terrain: hilly to mountainous with steep slopes; lowlands in north

Elevation extremes: 
- lowest point: South China Sea 0 m
- highest point: Tai Mo Shan 958 m

Natural resources: outstanding deepwater harbor, feldspar

Land use: 
- arable land: 5.05%
- other: 93.94% (1998 est.)
- permanent crops: 1.01%

Irrigated land:
Natural hazards: occasional typhoons

Environment - current issues: air and water pollution from rapid urbanization

Environment - international agreements: party to: Marine Dumping (associate member), Ship Pollution (associate member)

Geography - note: more than 200 islands

People

Population: 7,394,170 (July 2003 est.)

Age structure:
- 0-14 years: 17.3% (male 680,973; female 599,309)
- 15-64 years: 71.7% (male 2,619,929; female 2,679,430)
- 65 years and over: 11% (male 375,058; female 439,471) (2003 est.)

Median age:
- total: 37.5 years
- male: 37.1 years
- female: 37.7 years (2002)

Population growth rate: 1.22% (2003 est.)

Birth rate: 10.71 births/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Death rate: 6.19 deaths/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Net migration rate: 7.64 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Sex ratio:
- at birth: 1.07 male(s)/female
- under 15 years: 1.14 male(s)/female
- 15-64 years: 0.98 male(s)/female
- 65 years and over: 0.85 male(s)/female
- total population: 0.99 male(s)/female (2003 est.)

Infant mortality rate:
- total: 5.63 deaths/1,000 live births
- female: 5.84 deaths/1,000 live births (2003 est.)
- male: 5.44 deaths/1,000 live births

Life expectancy at birth:
- total population: 79.93 years
- male: 77.23 years
- female: 82.83 years (2003 est.)

Total fertility rate:
1.32 children born/woman (2003 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:** 0.1% (2001 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:** 2,600 (2001 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - deaths:** less than 100 (2001 est.)

**Nationality:**
- Noun: Chinese
- Adjective: Chinese

**Ethnic groups:**
Chinese 95%, other 5%

**Religions:** eclectic mixture of local religions 90%, Christian 10%

**Languages:** Chinese (Cantonese), English; both are official

**Literacy:**
- Definition: age 15 and over has ever attended school
- Total population: 94%
- Male: 97.1%
- Female: 90.5% (2003 est.)

**Government**

**Country name:**
- Conventional long form: Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
- Conventional short form: Hong Kong
- Local short form: Xianggang
- Local long form: Xianggang Tebie Xingzhengqu
- Abbreviation: HK

**Dependency status:** special administrative region of China

**Government type:** limited democracy

**Administrative divisions:** none (special administrative region of China)

**Independence:** none (special administrative region of China)

**National holiday:** National Day (Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China), 1 October (1949); note - 1 July 1997 is celebrated as Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day

**Constitution:** Basic Law approved in March 1990 by China's National People's Congress is Hong Kong's "mini-constitution"
Legal system: based on English common law

Suffrage: direct election 18 years of age; universal for permanent residents living in the territory of Hong Kong for the past seven years; indirect election limited to about 100,000 members of functional constituencies and an 800-member election committee drawn from broad regional groupings, municipal organizations, and central government bodies

Executive branch: President of China HU Jintao (since 15 March 2003)
head of government: Chief Executive TUNG Chee-hwa (since 1 July 1997)
cabinet: Executive Council consists of three ex-officio members and 10 appointed members; ex-officio members are: Chief Secretary Donald TSANG Yam-kuen (since 1 May 2001), Financial Secretary Antony LEUNG (since 1 May 2001), and Secretary of Justice Elsie LEUNG (since 1 July 1997)
elections: TUNG Chee-Hwa was elected to a second term in March 2002 by an 800-member election committee dominated by pro-Beijing forces; the next election is scheduled to be held in 2007

Legislative branch: unicameral Legislative Council or LEGCO (60 seats; 30 indirectly elected by functional constituencies, 24 elected by popular vote, and 6 elected by an 800-member election committee; members serve four-year terms)
elections: last held 10 September 2000 (next to be held in September 2004)
election results: percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - Democratic Party 12, Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong 10, Liberal Party 7, Frontier Party 5, Hong Kong Progressive Alliance 4, New Century Forum 2, Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood 1, independents 19

Judicial branch: Court of Final Appeal in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Political parties and leaders: Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood [Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, chairman]; Citizens Party [Alex CHAN Kai-chung]; Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong [Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, chairman]; Democratic Party [Martin LEE Chu-ming, chairman]; Frontier Party [Emily LAU Wai-hing, chairwoman]; Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood [leader NA]; Hong Kong Progressive Alliance [Ambrose LAU Hon-chuen]; Liberal Party [James TIEN Pei-chun, chairman]; New Century Forum [NQ Ching-fai, chairman]

Political pressure groups and leaders: Chinese General Chamber of Commerce (pro-China); Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong; Confederation of Trade Unions (pro-democracy) [LAU Chin-shek, president; LEE Cheuk-yan, general secretary]; Federation of Hong Kong Industries; Federation of Trade Unions (pro-China) [LEE Chark-tim, president]; Hong Kong Alliance in Support of the Patriotic Democratic Movement in China [Szeto WAH, chairman]; Hong Kong and Kowloon Trade Union Council (pro-Taiwan); Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce; Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union [CHEUNG Man-kwong, president]; Liberal Democratic Federation [HU Fa-kuang, chairman]
International organization participation:
APEC, AsDB, BIS, ESCAP (associate), ICC, ICFTU, IHO, IMO (associate), Interpol (subbureau), IOC, ISO (correspondent), WCL, WCO, WMO, WToO (associate), WTrO

Diplomatic representation in the US:
none (special administrative region of China)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Consul General James KEITH
consulate(s) general: 26 Garden Road, Hong Kong
mailing address: PSC 461, Box 1, FPO AP 96521-0006
telephone: [852] 2523-9011
FAX: [852] 2524-0860

Flag description:
red with a stylized, white, five-petal bauhinia flower in the center

Economy - Hong Kong

Economy overview:
Hong Kong has a free market economy highly dependent on international trade. Natural resources are limited, and food and raw materials must be imported. Imports and exports, including reexports, each exceed GDP in dollar value. Even before Hong Kong reverted to Chinese administration on 1 July 1997 it had extensive trade and investment ties with China. Hong Kong has been further integrating its economy with China because China's growing openness to the world economy has increased competitive pressure on Hong Kong's service industries, and Hong Kong's re-export business from China is a major driver of growth. Per capita GDP compares with the level in the four big economies of Western Europe. GDP growth averaged a strong 5% in 1989-1997, but Hong Kong suffered two recessions in the past 6 years because of the Asian financial crisis in 1998 and the global downturn of 2001-2002. The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak has also battered Hong Kong's economy but the resumption of strong growth began in 2003.

GDP: purchasing power parity - $198.5 billion (2002 est.)
GDP - real growth rate: 2.3% (2002 est.)
GDP - per capita: purchasing power parity - $27,200 (2002 est.)
GDP - composition by sector:
agriculture: 0.1%
industry: 13.4%
services: 86.5% (2001 est.)

Population below poverty line:
NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:
lowest 10%: NA%
highest 10%: NA%

Inflation rate
(consumer prices): 3% (2002 est.)

Labor force: 3.52 million (2001 est.)

Labor force - by occupation: wholesale and retail trade, restaurants, and hotels 31%, financing, insurance, and real estate 13%, community and social services 12%, manufacturing 6%, transport and communications 6%, construction 5%, other 25% (2002 est.)

Unemployment rate: 7.5% (2002 est.)

Budget: revenues: $22.8 billion
expenditures: $30.7 billion, including capital expenditures of $NA (FY02/03)

Industries: textiles, clothing, tourism, banking, shipping, electronics, plastics, toys, watches, clocks

Industrial production growth rate: -9.7% (2002 est.)

Electricity - production: 30.48 billion kWh (2001)

Electricity - production by source: fossil fuel: 100%
hydro: 0%
other: 0% (2001)
nuclear: 0%

Electricity - consumption: 37.12 billion kWh (2001)

Electricity - exports: 1.581 billion kWh (2001)

Electricity - imports: 10.36 billion kWh (2001)

Oil - production: 0 bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - consumption: 257,000 bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - exports: NA (2001)

Oil - imports: NA (2001)

Natural gas - production: 0 cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - consumption: 680.9 million cu m (2001 est.)
exports: 0 cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas -
imports: 680.9 million cu m (2001 est.)

Agriculture -
products: fresh vegetables; poultry, fish, pork

Exports: $200.3 billion f.o.b., including reexports (2002 est.)

Exports -
commodities: electrical machinery and appliances, textiles, apparel, footwear, watches and clocks, toys, plastics, precious stones

Exports -
partners: China 34%, US 19.5%, UK 5.5%, Japan 4.8% (2002)

Imports: $208.1 billion (2002 est.)

Imports -
commodities: foodstuffs, transport equipment, raw materials, semimanufactures, petroleum, plastics, machinery, electrical equipment; a large share is reexported

Imports -
partners: China 37.5%, Japan 12.2%, Taiwan 7.3%, US 6.2%, Singapore 5.3%, South Korea 5% (2002)

Debt - external: $49.5 billion (2002 est.)

Currency: Hong Kong dollar (HKD)

Currency code: HKD


Fiscal year: 1 April - 31 March

Communications Hong Kong

Telephones -
main lines in use: 3.839 million (1999)

Telephones -
mobile cellular: 3.7 million (December 1999)

Telephone system: general assessment: modern facilities provide excellent domestic and international services
domestic: microwave radio relay links and extensive fiber-optic network
international: satellite earth stations - 3 Intelsat (1 Pacific Ocean and 2 Indian Ocean); coaxial cable to Guangzhou, China; access to 5 international submarine cables providing connections to ASEAN member nations, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, Middle
East, and Western Europe

Radio broadcast stations: AM 7, FM 13, shortwave 0 (1998)

Television broadcast stations: 4 (plus two repeaters) (1997)

Internet country code: .hk

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): 17 (2000)

Internet users: 4.35 million (2002)

Transportation

Railways: total: 34 km
standard gauge: 34 km 1.435-m gauge (electrified and double-tracked)
note: connects to China railway system at Hong Kong-China border (2001)

Highways: total: 1,831 km
paved: 1,831 km
unpaved: 0 km (1999 est.)

Waterways: none

Ports and harbors: Hong Kong

Merchant marine: total: 549 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 16,176,728 GRT/27,119,764 DWT
ships by type: barge carrier 1, bulk 315, cargo 66, chemical tanker 15, combination bulk 2, container 86, liquefied gas 16, multi-functional large-load carrier 1, petroleum tanker 40, refrigerated cargo 2, roll on/roll off 2, short-sea passenger 1, vehicle carrier 2, includes some foreign-owned ships registered here as a flag of convenience: Belgium 5, Belize 1, British Virgin Islands 1, China 115, Denmark 2, Germany 19, Greece 2, India 8, Japan 8, Liberia 1, Malaysia 7, Norway 1, Panama 2, Philippines 5, Singapore 7, South Korea 2, Taiwan 1, UK 27, Virgin Islands (UK) 1
note: (2002 est.)

Airports: 3 (2002)

Airports - with paved runways: total: 3
over 3,047 m: 1
1,524 to 2,437 m: 1
914 to 1,523 m: 1 (2002)

Heliports: 2 (2002)
Military

Hong Kong

Military branches:
no regular indigenous military forces; Hong Kong garrison of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) including elements of the PLA Ground Forces, PLA Navy, and PLA Air Force; these forces are under the direct leadership of the Central Military Commission in Beijing and under administrative control of the adjacent Guangzhou Military Region

Military manpower - military age:
18 years of age (2003 est.)

Military manpower - availability:
males age 15-49: 2,033,716 (2003 est.)

Military manpower - fit for military service:
males age 15-49: 1,524,903 (2003 est.)

Military manpower - reaching military age annually:
males: 47,477 (2003 est.)

Military expenditures - percent of GDP:
NA% (FY02)

Military - note:
defense is the responsibility of China

Transnational Issues

Hong Kong

Disputes - international:
none

Illicit drugs:
Makes strenuous law enforcement efforts, but faces serious challenges in controlling transit of heroin and methamphetamine to regional and world markets; modern banking system provides a conduit for money laundering; rising indigenous use of synthetic drugs, especially among young people

This page was last updated on 18 December, 2003