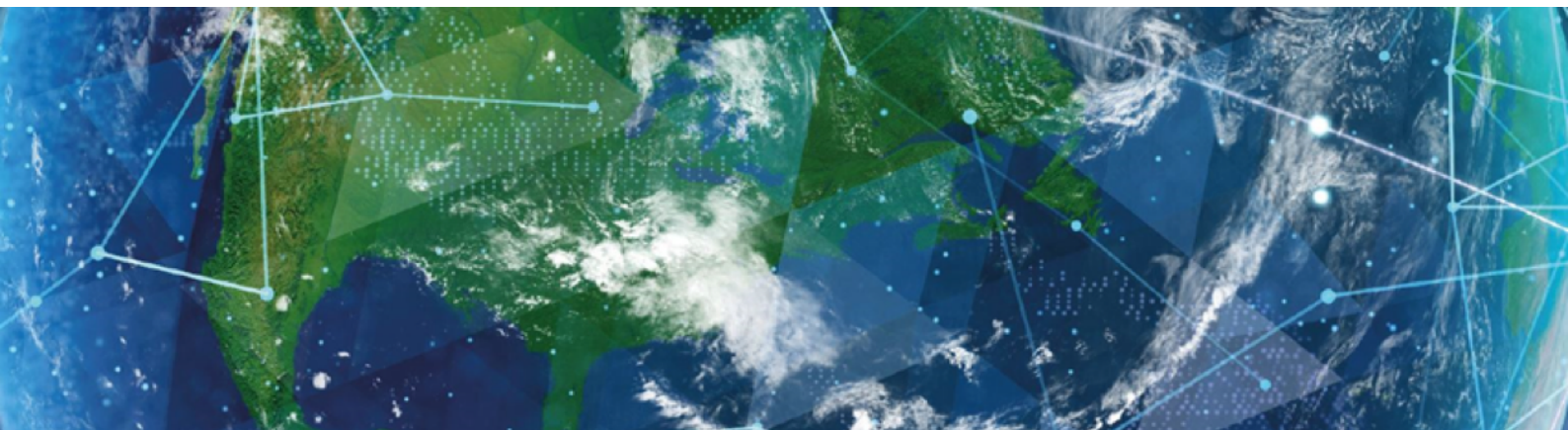


Country Travel Advice Report

Hong Kong

Overall Risk Rating: **Low | 2.25**



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Country Risk Rating Breakdown

Country Overall Risk Rating				Low 2.25
Security	Environmental	Infrastructural	Political	Medical
Low 2.25	Low 2.00	Low - Moderate 2.50	Low - Moderate 2.75	Low - Moderate 2.75

Country Overview

Low | 2.25

Hong Kong is a special administrative region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China, which is located to the east of the Pearl River estuary on the country's southern coast. Due to its strategic location, Hong Kong serves as a global financial center and is a key transport and logistics hub for the region. It is one of the most densely populated areas in the world and has one of the highest per-capita income rates, although income inequality is also very pronounced. Despite its economic success, Hong Kong's relationship with mainland China has been a source of tension, with various groups calling for greater autonomy and political reform in recent years.

While Hong Kong's location has spared it from powerful earthquakes, the territory is vulnerable to powerful storm systems during the typhoon season.

Security

Low | 2.25

Overview

Hong Kong's contested status and public distrust of the pro-Beijing executive government have resulted in recurrent unrest in recent years. However, demonstrations have decreased significantly due to gathering bans during the COVID-19 pandemic and enforcement of the National Security Law (NSL) introduced in 2020, under which prominent anti-government activists have been charged with anti-state activities.

There are no major concerns over crime or terrorism in Hong Kong. While crime and terrorism are not major concerns in Hong Kong, there have been occasional reports of pickpocketing and other petty crimes in crowded areas such as shopping districts and public transportation. There is a low level of corruption and the rule of law is generally observed and enforced. However, the national security law could further erode Hong Kong's political autonomy and rule of law, and has led to sanctions by the US government.

Political

Low - Moderate | 2.75

Overview

Hong Kong's political regime continues to face significant challenges as its mandate to rule has been called into question by popular anti-China protests whilst the pro-Beijing Chief Executive has been undermined by 'pro-democracy' civil society groups. The new Hong Kong national security legislation has further eroded its political autonomy and heightened concerns about the rule of law; it is vague and wide in scope, prompting multiple countries to warn of its potential arbitrary use. Levels of corruption are low, whilst the rule of law is generally observed outside of protest activity.

Infrastructural

Low - Moderate | 2.50

Overview

Buses

Public buses can be found in Hong Kong. Generally, they run on time, and are safe. Personal and property security is generally good aboard intra- and inter-city buses.

Car Rentals and Driving Conditions

Car rentals are available. Foreigners planning to drive in Hong Kong (City) must have a valid driver's license. Consider road and weather conditions in your choice of vehicle. Road safety in Hong Kong is generally good. Ensure familiarity with local laws and driving practices. Keep doors and windows locked, and valuables out of sight, as thieves may target parked vehicles as well as those trapped in slow moving traffic or at stop signals. Park in well-lit, populated areas or secure facilities.

Mass Transit in Hong Kong

Public transport in Hong Kong is generally modern and safe.

The metro system is modern, well maintained, clean, and generally safe. Services are available 0600-0100.

Taxis and Ride-sharing Services

Taxis are readily available in Hong Kong at official stands outside of airports, and train or bus stations, or at organized queues in downtown areas; it is safe to hail a cab on the street. Official taxis are usually red, green, or blue. Taxi drivers are generally trustworthy.

Ride-sharing services or vehicles ordered through online apps are available in Hong Kong. Some ride-hailing services in Hong Kong operate on unclear legal grounds; confirm local restrictions before using ride-hailing services.

There are regular domestic flights from Hong Kong to other cities. Major air carriers offer regular flights from Hong Kong to various international destinations.

Hong Kong International Airport (HKG) is Hong Kong's main international airport and is located approximately 25 km (15.5 miles) west of Hong Kong. Onward public transportation from the airport is provided by bus, ferry, rail, and taxi services. Airport limousine and car rental services are also available. Airport security personnel are government-trained and -supervised, and passenger security screening procedures are efficient and effective. Securing baggage and all personal items is important, as theft is a standard threat. Arrivals and departures are prone to delays due to chronic air traffic control issues.

Environmental

Low | 2.00

Overview

Hong Kong has a sub-tropical climate and is vulnerable to powerful storm systems during the typhoon season from May to early November. Air pollution is also a concern and minor earth tremors intermittently affect the territory.

Medical

Low - Moderate | 2.75

Overview

Although Hong Kong has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, it has largely been successful in containing the spread of the virus. High-quality medical facilities are available throughout Hong Kong, whilst well-stocked pharmacies are present across the territory.

Fact Box

Government Type	Presidential Limited Democracy; a special administrative region of the PRC
Population	7,305,700 (2015)
Currency	Hong Kong Dollar
Languages	Cantonese (official) 90%, English (official) 4%, Other, including Mandarin (official) 6%
Time Zone	UTC+8
Religions	Local religions 90%, Christian 10%
Traffic	Drives on the left
Plug Types	Type G, Type D
Ethnicities	Chinese 93%, Other, including Indonesian and Filipino 7%
Drinking Water	Safe to Drink
Additional Information	<p>Significant Dates:</p> <p>January 1 - New Year's Day (typically includes annual anti-government protests organized by the Civil Human Rights Front) February 5-7 - Chinese New Year April 5 - Ching Ming (Tomb Sweeping Day) April 19 - Good Friday April 22 - Easter Monday May 1 - Labour Day May 13 - Buddha's Birthday June 7 - Dragon Boat Festival (Tuen Ng) July 1 - Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Establishment Day September 14 - Mid-Autumn Festival October 7 - Chung Yeung Festival December 25 - Christmas Day (In the past, the 24, 25 and 26 December have seen Christmas-themed anti-government demonstrations and clashes between protesters and police in central Hong Kong) December 26 - Family Day</p>
International Country Code	+852

Travel Risk Advice

Vaccinations and Key Health Risks

You should visit a health care professional at least four to six weeks prior to the trip. Travellers should ensure that they have routine vaccination courses and boosters. Routine vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, varicella (chickenpox), polio, and annual flu vaccine.

Most travellers will require vaccines from:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid

Dependent on work, reason for travel, or underlying health conditions, some travellers may require vaccines from:

- Hepatitis B
- Rabies

Pre-departure

Travellers should have adequate travel insurance in place to enable rapid medical treatment or emergency extraction from country.

Travellers should provide friends and family with a copy of their travel itinerary, and make a copy of important travel and identification documents.

Following recent delays, flight cancellations and temporary closures of Hong Kong airport due to protest activity, travellers should monitor the status of their flight prior to departure to ascertain whether they will be affected.

Travellers should conduct research and ascertain whether protests are likely to take place in their area of operations, and amend itineraries accordingly to avoid public demonstrations and marches. The following [map](#) provides an overview of historic protest locations in the territory.

On Arrival

Due to the risk of protests, travellers should aim to transit through Hong Kong airport as quickly as possible and avoid waiting in the arrivals lounge and immediately outside the main airport building where past demonstrations have taken place.

In Transit

Public transport is typically safe - notwithstanding recent disruption due to unrest - and self-driving may be conducted.

Travellers between Hong Kong and mainland China have reported a recent increased in security checks at border crossings. Targeted travellers have indicated being asked to unlock their phones to allow access to Chinese border agents to inspect pictures, videos, as well as potential text and social media app messages pertaining to the protests in Hong Kong in an apparent move to prevent information about the current unrest from spreading into the mainland. Travellers should therefore ensure that any sensitive information is deleted and/or backed up externally prior to reaching the border. The importation of certain items linked to protests, such as black clothing and face masks, have also been intermittently banned and are likely to be confiscated at border crossings.

At Your Hotel

There are no extraneous measures that should be undertaken at the hotel.

In the Street

Travellers should avoid any demonstrations, protests and rallies, which may attract security forces and law enforcement officers and present a dynamic and volatile environment. They should also actively monitor scheduled pro-democracy protest events in the city through Drum Cussac alerts, local news and social media sources such as LIHKG and seek to plan their itineraries around these events.

During unsanctioned protests the Hong Kong police utilise a warning system based on color-coded flags:

- Blue: Warning -- illegal assembly
- Yellow: Police cordon, do not cross
- Red: Stop charging or we use force
- Black: Warning -- tear gas
- Orange: Disperse or police will open fire

Travellers should keep passports and other travel documents on their person at all times

Travellers should avoid overt displays of wealth and dress discreetly and appropriately to environment. Do not display money, jewellery or valuables and keep a low profile.

Travellers should be aware that the HKSAR administration has introduced an intermittent ban on the use of masks and clothing that obscures the wearers identity in public places. They should therefore avoid wearing items that cover the face to avoid potential arrest and detention.

Travellers should use only small denominations of the local currency, and keep large amounts of cash and cards in a separate place on your person. Reduce the contents of your wallet or purse contents, particularly cards which may denote affiliations, memberships and accounts. Do not use credit or debit cards unless absolutely necessary and then only at respected, well-known retail and service establishments.

Travellers should be aware that during periods of elevated unrest, cash machines in Hong Kong may introduce strict withdrawal limits. They should therefore ensure they have access to necessary funds prior to travel.

Travellers should ensure that their mobile phone is carried with sufficient battery life and programmed with appropriate emergency numbers. Travellers should also carry an ID card or passport and emergency medical information.

Travellers should be aware of their location and surroundings. Avoid high-crime areas and of walking through dimly lit streets after dark. Travellers should know routes and carry a map if necessary, but keep it concealed.

In crowded situations, travellers should be aware of jostling as this may be a ploy for pick-pockets. Travellers should also be aware of people loitering, and also that attackers may first pass their victim to attack from behind.

Travellers should avoid any demonstrations, protests and rallies, which may attract security forces and law enforcement officers and present a dynamic and volatile environment. They should also actively monitor scheduled pro-democracy protest events in the city through Drum Cussac alerts, local news and social media sources such as LIHKG and seek to plan their itineraries around these events.

Travellers should be aware that photographing government buildings or military facilities may result in detention by authorities. Travellers should ask permission before taking pictures of locals, especially women.

Same-sex relations are legal, and Hong Kong's Bill of Rights explicitly prohibits discrimination against individuals based on sexual orientation. LGBT pride festivals occur annually, and other related events also take place regularly, including with participation from lawmakers.

COVID-19 Information

Travel Restrictions: Authorities in Hong Kong will no longer require people to wear a facemask in indoor and outdoor locations, including public transport, from March 1. High-risk facilities like elderly care homes and hospitals have the option to require facemasks for staff and visitors; however, they are no longer required to present a negative PCR test result for entry..

International Travel Restrictions Hong Kong permits entry for Hong Kong residents and children aged 11 or below from all locations and travelers from mainland China, Macau, and Taiwan, regardless of vaccination status. Travelers from Taiwan and international locations must also present a negative result of a PCR or RAT obtained within 48 and 24 hours, respectively, before departure. All passengers can voluntarily upload proof of a negative COVID-19 test result via a Health Declaration Form. See here for the Health Declaration Form: <https://www.chp.gov.hk/hdf/>.

Authorities in mainland China have lifted most restrictions on travelers from Macau and Hong Kong. Officials have reopened all previously closed customs checkpoints and removed quotas on travelers. Individuals who have not traveled abroad in the past seven days do not need to undergo COVID-19 testing. Those who have traveled abroad will be required to provide proof of a negative test dating within 48 hours of arrival. Travelers entering mainland China by land from Macau and Hong Kong will no longer be required to register in advance.

Threat Scale Reference

Threat Rating	Implication
1 - Negligible	The operating environment is benign and there are only isolated threats to business and/or travel.
2 – Low	The operating environment is generally permissive, although there are a limited number of threats to business and/or travel that requires basic mitigations.
3 – Moderate	The operating environment is challenging and there are serious threats to business and/or travel that requires some mitigations.
4 – High	The operating environment is hostile and there are significant threats to business, personal safety and/or travel, requiring comprehensive mitigations and planning.
5 – Extreme	The operating environment is characterised by pervasive direct threats to business, personal safety and/or travel, requiring strict risk management procedures.

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