

Hong Kong

(dependent territory of the UK)

Geography

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

Area:

total area: 1,040 sq km

land area: 990 sq km

Land boundaries: total 30 km, 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

Natural resources: outstanding deepwater harbor, feldspar

Land use:

arable land: 7%

permanent crops: 1%

meadows and pastures: 1%

forest and woodland: 12%

other: 79%

Irrigated land: 20 sq km (1989)

Environment:

current issues: air and water pollution from rapid urbanization

natural hazards: occasional typhoons

Note: more than 200 islands

People

Population: 5,542,869 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 19% (female 499,460; male 549,734)

15-64 years: 70% (female 1,866,540; male 2,016,684)

65 years and over: 11% (female 331,391; male 279,060) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: -0.12% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 12.02 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 6.02 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -7.22 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 5.8 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 80.18 years

male: 76.78 years

female: 83.78 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 1.39 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Chinese
adjective: Chinese

Ethnic divisions: Chinese 95%, other 5%

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

Languages: Chinese (Cantonese), English

Literacy: age 15 and over has ever attended school (1971)
total population: 77%
male: 90%
female: 64%

Government

Names:
conventional long form: none
conventional short form: Hong Kong

Type: dependent territory of the UK scheduled to revert to China in 1997

Capital: Victoria

Administrative divisions: none (dependent territory of the UK)

Independence: none (dependent territory of the UK; the UK signed an agreement with China on 19 December 1984 to return Hong Kong to China on 1 July 1997; in the joint declaration, China promises to respect Hong Kong's existing social and economic systems and lifestyle)

National holiday: Liberation Day, 29 August (1945)

Legal system: based on English common law

Suffrage: direct election 21 years of age

Flag: blue with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant with the Hong Kong coat of arms on a white disk centered on the outer half of the flag; the coat of arms contains a shield (bearing two junks below a crown) held by a lion (representing the UK) and a dragon (representing China) with another lion above the shield and a banner bearing the words HONG KONG below the shield

Economy

Overview: Hong Kong has a bustling free market economy with few tariffs or nontariff barriers. Natural resources are limited, and food and raw materials must be imported. A shortage of labor continues to put upward pressure on prices and the cost of living.

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

Agriculture: minor role in the economy; local farmers produce 26% fresh vegetables, 27% live poultry; 8% of land area suitable for farming

Illicit drugs: a hub for Southeast Asian heroin trade; transshipment and major financial and money-laundering center; increasing indigenous amphetamine and cocaine abuse

Transportation

Railroads:
total: 35 km

Highways:
total: 1,100 km

Ports: Hong Kong

Airports:
total: 3

Defence Forces

Branches: Headquarters of British Forces, Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force, Royal Hong Kong Police Force

Note: defence is the responsibility of the UK