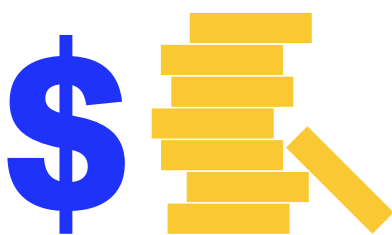




# THE VALUE OF AIR TRANSPORT TO HONG KONG (SAR), CHINA

Air transport significantly contributes to the Hong Kong (SAR) economy

## Total economic impact of aviation in Hong Kong (SAR)



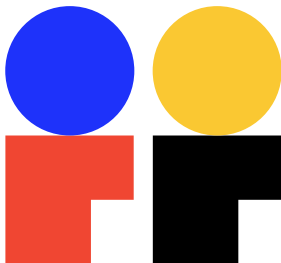
37.7

USD billion contribution to GDP



9.9

% of GDP



323

thousand jobs

There are different ways of measuring air transport's impact on an economy. Two key indicators are the number of jobs and the contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) generated by the aviation sector, including airlines, airport operators and on-site businesses, air navigation service providers (ANSPs), and manufacturers ("direct" aviation players). In Hong Kong (SAR), 99,100 people are directly employed in aviation, generating USD 14.0 billion of economic output, equal to 3.7% of total GDP.

Additional benefits are generated by the wider supply chain, employee spending, and tourism activities contributing a total of USD 37.7 billion to GDP and 323,000 jobs.

Tourism supported by aviation contributes USD 5.3 billion to the country's GDP and employs 75,200 people. International tourists to Hong Kong (SAR) are estimated to contribute USD 24.0 billion annually<sup>2</sup> to the economy through the purchase of goods and services from local businesses.

Source: Oxford Economics, 2023<sup>1</sup>

## GDP contribution and employment within the aviation industry and tourism in Hong Kong (SAR)



Airlines	Airports, ANSPs, civil manufacturing	Tourism supported by aviation
USD 7.9 bn	USD 6.1 bn	USD 5.3 bn
23,600 jobs	75,500 jobs	75,200 jobs

Source: Oxford Economics, 2023<sup>3</sup>

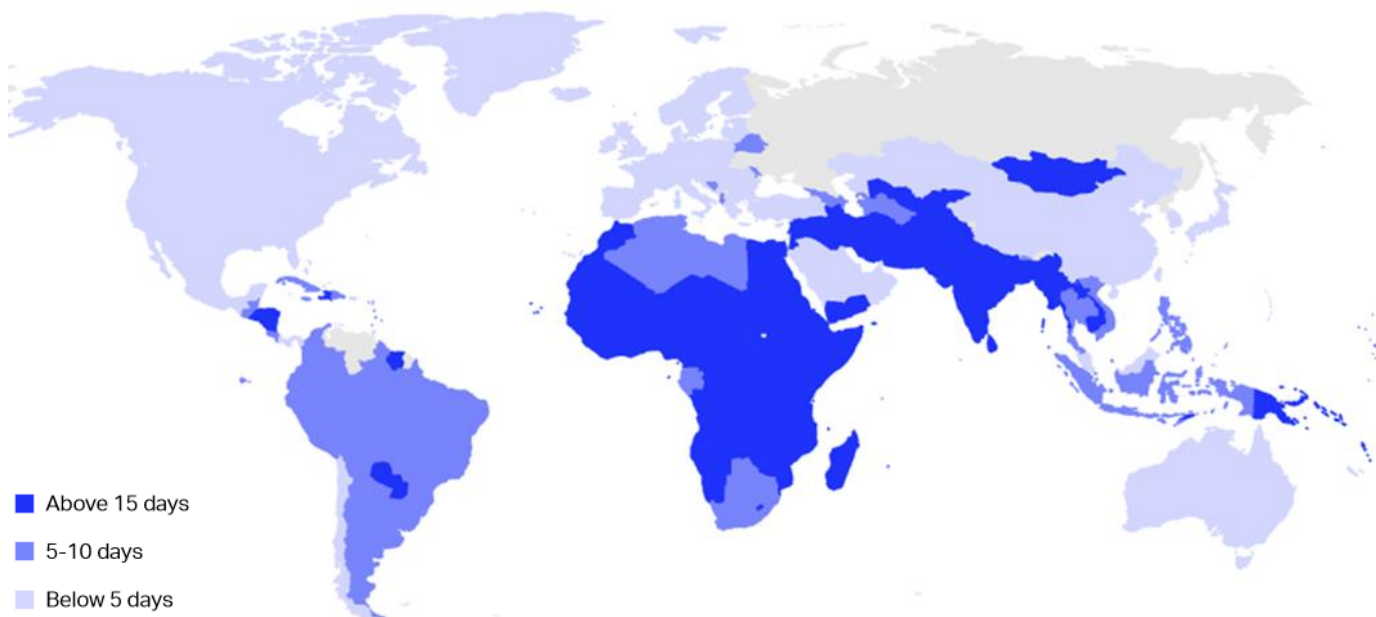
Note: The table above provides the primary components of the results for 2023; it does not capture indirect and induced benefits, which also form part of the overall total.

## Aviation delivers substantial and widespread social benefits

Aviation creates a range of social benefits and contributes significantly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>4</sup> Air transport enhances access to education, connects friends and families, facilitates cultural exchange, and drives socio-economic development. Acting together, these forces enable a region to expand its productive potential, delivering long-term economic growth and supporting the reduction in poverty and improvement in living standards for all of the nation's citizens.

The cost of flying impacts the magnitude of the benefits that can be generated by air travel. In the past 50 years, flight costs have decreased by 70% globally,<sup>5</sup> making air transport more accessible. The average real airfare in Hong Kong (SAR) decreased by 53%<sup>6</sup> between 2011 and 2023, with the local population now needing to work 2.3 days<sup>7</sup> to afford a plane ticket. Overall, 2,096 flights per 1,000 population<sup>8</sup> were taken in 2023.

### The number of days of work required to be able to afford a plane ticket in 2023



Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics based on data from IATA Direct Data Solutions (DDS) and World Bank<sup>9</sup>

## Air transport facilitates the flow of goods, investment, and trade

Aviation stimulates global trade and investment, enables labor and capital productivity improvements, boosts innovation, and fosters knowledge exchange. The movement of goods, enabled by the air transport industry, brings about improved economic outcomes via catalytic collaboration, specialization, and more efficient allocation of resources across all sectors of the local and world economy.

Aviation plays a crucial role in, for example, enabling the development of dynamic and efficient supply chains, and in driving the growth in e-commerce. In times of crisis, the world relies on air cargo to provide humanitarian aid and emergency relief.

4.3 million tonnes of air cargo were transported through the airport in Hong Kong (SAR) in 2023, supporting the territory's total import and export volumes.

**4.3**  
million tonnes  
of air cargo handled



**5<sup>th</sup>**

**Largest air cargo market**

**11<sup>th</sup>**

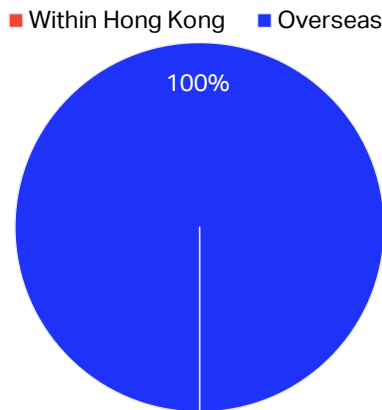
**Largest trade market**

Source: Hong Kong International Airport, 2024 (cargo data); World Bank, 2023 (trade data)

## A well-developed aviation network transforms lives and communities

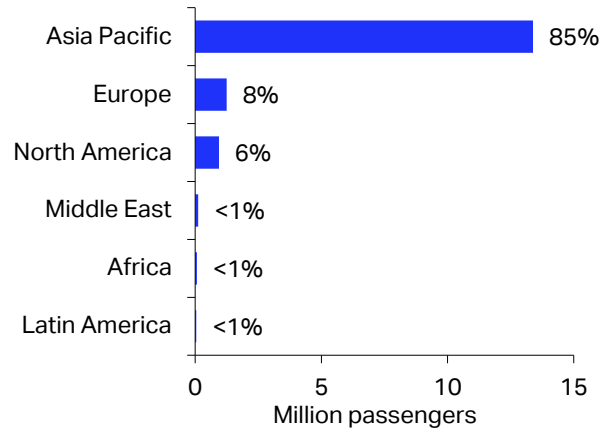
By swiftly and safely connecting people in different cities, air transport generates benefits to consumers and the wider economy. It makes the world smaller, enriching lives and enhancing cultural diversity. In rural and remote areas, air transport provides an essential lifeline for the community, safeguarding access to healthcare, education, and often employment.

### Domestic and overseas O-D passenger departures, % share



Source: IATA DDS, 2023

### Overseas O-D passenger departures from Hong Kong (SAR) to regions

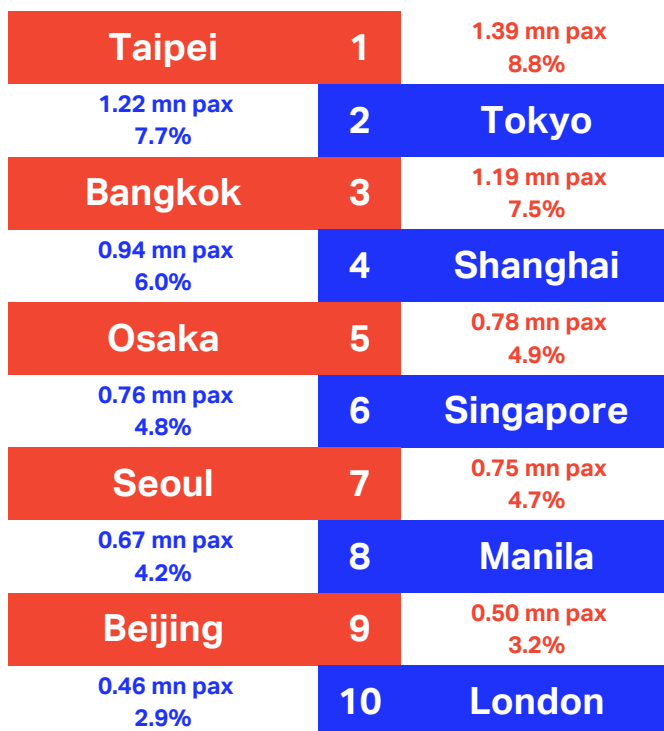


Source: IATA DDS, 2023

Note: Latin America includes South and Central America & the Caribbean.

Overseas air traffic accounted for 100% of total origin-destination (O-D) departures for Hong Kong (SAR) in 2023, equal to 15.8 million passenger departures. Asia Pacific is the largest overseas market for passenger flows from Hong Kong (SAR), followed by Europe and North America. Almost 13.4 million passengers departed from Hong Kong (SAR) to Asia Pacific (85% of the total), 1.2 million to Europe (8% of the total), and 938,400 to North America (6% of the total). The recovery from the covid pandemic remains underway.

### Top 10 most popular city destinations from Hong Kong (SAR)



Source: IATA DDS, 2023

Note: Ranking based on overseas O-D traffic from Hong Kong (SAR), measured in terms of the total number of departing passengers, and as a share of total passengers in 2023



passengers departed



market by passenger departures

**60.8%**

recovery in overseas passenger departures vs 2019



of global overseas passenger traffic



of regional overseas passenger traffic

Source: IATA DDS, 2023

Note: Measured by overseas O-D passenger departures.

## Connectivity is vital to economic development

Air connectivity is fundamental to unlocking a region's economic growth potential and prosperity; it enables industries across all regions within the region to engage in dynamic business activity. The extent of domestic and international connectivity is an enabler and an accelerator of both the generation and distribution of economic benefits.

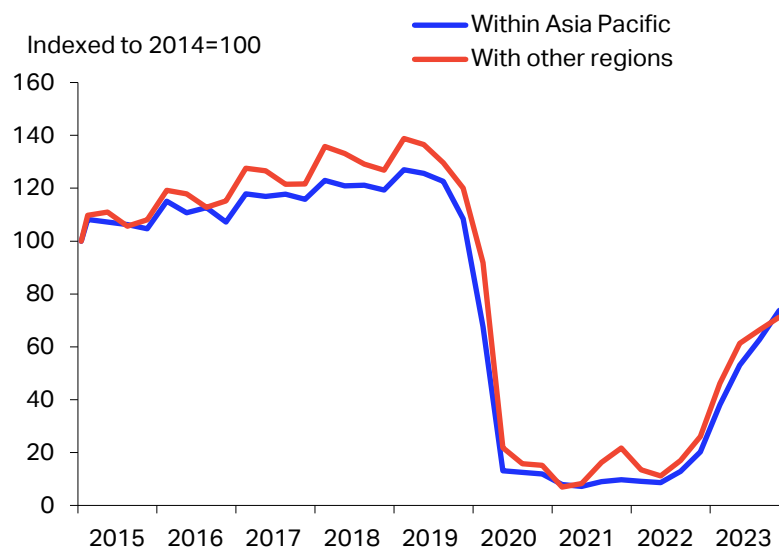
### Air connectivity indicators for Hong Kong (SAR)

<b>1</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>70</b>
airport with commercial scheduled flights	overseas airports directly connected	countries and areas connected by direct flights	outbound overseas flights a day	new overseas routes in the last 5 years	operating airlines <sup>10</sup>

Source: OAG, 2023

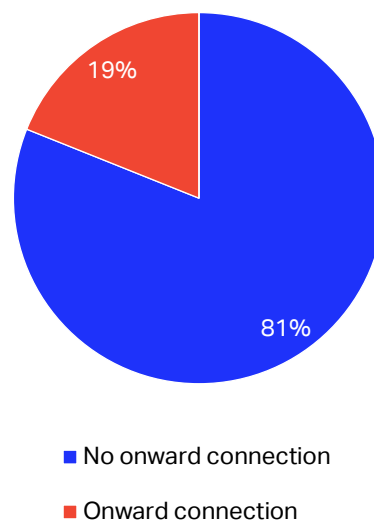
Since 2014, the Hong Kong (SAR) overseas air connectivity index has decreased by 43% within the Asia Pacific region and by 38% with all other regions. Again, this is largely caused by the covid-19 pandemic, and the recovery is still underway. Understanding the nature of that connectivity is also important. For Hong Kong (SAR), 81% of passengers either finished their journey at the point of entry or continued traveling using a different mode of transport. 19% of all passengers arriving in Hong Kong (SAR) continued their journey on a connecting flight.

### Overseas air connectivity of Hong Kong (SAR)



Source: IATA Sustainability & Economics based on data from OAG, 2023<sup>11</sup>

### Arriving passenger onward air travel



Source: IATA DDS, 2023<sup>12</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Air Transport Action Group, 2024. *Aviation Benefits Beyond Borders* report based on data from Oxford Economics.  
<sup>2</sup> World Trade and Tourism Council, 2023. *Tourism Data and Statistics*.  
<sup>3</sup> Air Transport Action Group, 2024. *Aviation Benefits Beyond Borders* report based on data from Oxford Economics.  
<sup>4</sup> Air Transport Action Group, n.d. *Sustainable Development Goals and Aviation*.  
<sup>5</sup> Air Transport Action Group, 2020. *Aviation Benefits Beyond Borders* report.  
<sup>6</sup> Real airfares refers to the average fare for O-D trips to/from/within territory adjusted by inflation. Calculated based on data from IATA Direct Data Solutions (2023) and International Monetary Fund (2023).  
<sup>7</sup> The number of days that the local population needs to work to afford a flight is estimated based on the average fare for travel and GDP per capita in 2023. Calculated based on data from IATA Direct Data Solutions (2023) and World Bank (2023).  
<sup>8</sup> The number of flights per capita is estimated based on the O-D passenger traffic and the population in 2023. Calculated based on data from IATA Direct Data Solutions (2023) and World Bank (2023).  
<sup>9</sup> The number of days that the local population needs to work to afford a flight is estimated based on the average airfare for travel and GDP per capita in 2023. Calculated based on data from IATA Direct Data Solutions (2023) and World Bank (2023).  
<sup>10</sup> A threshold of at least one scheduled flight a week is applied.  
<sup>11</sup> IATA Connectivity Index is calculated as the total route capacity (in terms of seats available) weighted by the destination airport's capacity. The Connectivity Index is calculated based on data from OAG (2023).  
<sup>12</sup> Refers to overseas passengers arriving in the territory and their onward connections. For example, if a passenger arrives in the territory but does not connect either domestically or internationally by air, they are categorized as "No onward connection". A passenger connecting within Hong Kong is categorized as "Onward connection".