ECONOMIC REVIEW (A Monthly Issue) Issue 9, 2026

中國銀行 香港金融研究院
BANK OF CHINA Hong Kong Financial Research Institute

http://www.bochk.com

Five-Year Plan and Policy Address Closely Aligned to Consolidate Strengths and Nurture New Growth Drivers

Wilson Chong, Senior Economist

Chief Executive John Lee announced the First Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2026–2030) on 16 September 2026, alongside his fifth Policy Address. This year marks the opening year of the National 15th Five-Year Plan. For the first time, Hong Kong has formulated its own Five-Year Plan to proactively align with national development strategies and systematically map out the city's economic and social development over the next five years. The *Policy Address*, taking into account the global environment, economic outlook and latest developments, further translates the medium- to long-term directions of the Five-Year Plan into annual policy initiatives, major works and key projects. The two documents are closely interconnected, bringing Hong Kong's medium- to long-term planning and annual policy implementation into closer alignment.

One important feature of Hong Kong's first Five-Year Plan is that, in addition to setting out development directions and key tasks, it establishes 22 major indicators covering areas including the economy, innovation and technology (I&T), finance, the Northern Metropolis (NM), talent, tourism, people's livelihood and environmental protection. Five of these are binding indicators, providing clearer benchmarks for measuring Hong Kong's development over the next five years. For example, the Plan targets the production of 900 hectares of "spade-ready sites" in the NM cumulatively from 2026-27 to 2030-31, strives to raise Total Domestic Expenditure on Innovation Activities to 3% of GDP after 2030, and seeks to strengthen Hong Kong's leading positions as a global financial centre and global cross-boundary wealth management centre. Compared with policy initiatives primarily formulated on an annual basis, the Five-Year Plan provides a longer-term perspective, while the *Policy Address* serves to translate these

BOCHK Research Products

- 中銀財經述評
- **Economic Review**
- Offshore RMB Express
- Southeast Asia Watch
- Green Insights
- 中銀策略研究
- 內部研究報告

Author: Wilson Chong
Email: wilsonchong @bochk.com
Tel: +852 282 66192

Contact: Ms. Siu
Email: sandysiu@bochk.com
Tel: +852 282 66206

Please follow BOCHK on WeChat for the latest economic and financial markets analyses

Disclaimer : This article reflects only the viewpoints of the author. It neither represents the opinion of the institution nor constitute any investment advice.

medium- to long-term directions into concrete work for the year ahead. From an economic development perspective, the policy initiatives in the two documents can be considered under four key areas.

I. Financial Development: Consolidating Traditional Strengths and Enhancing the Overall Competitiveness of Hong Kong as an International Financial Centre

Hong Kong's status as an international financial centre is one of its most internationally competitive traditional strengths. The Five-Year Plan identifies strengthening Hong Kong's roles as a Global Offshore Renminbi Business Hub, International Asset and Wealth Management Centre, and International Risk Management Centre as important development directions. The 2026 *Policy Address* further sets out initiatives covering offshore Renminbi (RMB) business, fixed income, securities, asset and wealth management, risk management, commodities, green finance and fintech. The policy focus goes beyond expanding the scale of individual markets. By broadening asset classes and trading scenarios and enhancing market infrastructure, Hong Kong is further developing a diversified and multi-layered financial market ecosystem.

Offshore RMB business is an important part of this development. As the world's largest offshore RMB business hub, one of the keys to Hong Kong's future development is to maintain the advantage of its RMB liquidity pool while further expanding the use of RMB in investment, financing, trading, payment and risk management. The *Policy Address* proposes introducing a tendering mechanism for seven-day offshore RMB liquidity and increasing liquidity arrangements across different tenors. It also seeks to further expand the dim sum bond market, enrich RMB investment and risk management products, and broaden the uses of RMB assets. These initiatives will help foster greater interaction among funding supply, product issuance, investment allocation and risk management, further enhancing the depth and breadth of Hong Kong's offshore RMB market.

Another noteworthy development is the continued broadening of asset classes in Hong Kong's financial markets. Hong Kong has accelerated the development of its fixed income and commodity markets in recent years. This year's *Policy Address* further proposes developing new growth areas in fixed income markets and expediting the development of an international gold trading market. On gold, the Government plans to officially launch the Central Clearing System for Gold in the first quarter of 2027, while HKEX will announce details of new RMB-denominated gold futures contracts with physical delivery. Hong Kong will also continue to expand its international metal trading and delivery network. These initiatives will help Hong Kong develop a more diversified financial market structure encompassing fixed income, gold and other commodities, complementing its existing strengths in equities and wealth management.

From a longer-term perspective, the competitiveness of a financial centre depends not only on the trading volume of individual markets, but also on the extent to which different markets, assets and services are interconnected. As equities, bonds, RMB assets, gold, commodities, insurance and wealth management develop in greater synergy, Hong Kong can provide global investors with a more comprehensive range of asset allocation and risk management tools. This will also facilitate the more effective channelling of capital into the

real economy, including I&T, infrastructure, shipping and green transformation, further enhancing the overall competitiveness of Hong Kong as an international financial centre.

II. Innovation and Technology and the Northern Metropolis: Accelerating the Transformation of R&D Outcomes and Advancing I&T Industrialisation

While finance represents a traditional strength of Hong Kong, I&T and new industrialisation are important areas for nurturing new growth drivers. Over the past few years, Hong Kong has continued to devote resources to I&T infrastructure, research and development (R&D), talent attraction and enterprise development. The policy focus is gradually extending from building the foundations for I&T development towards the transformation of R&D outcomes, industry clustering and development at scale. The 2026 *Policy Address* proposes pressing ahead with the development of the "Three Major Innovation and Technology Parks and Five Key Research and Development Institutions", accelerating the development of Hong Kong's new industrialisation system, strengthening support for start-ups and the transformation of universities' R&D outcomes, and exploring the establishment of the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Application Scenario Promotion Centre. These initiatives reflect a stronger policy emphasis on connecting the different stages from R&D and transformation to market application.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the most prominent areas of development. This year's *Policy Address* proposes further strengthening AI infrastructure and industry support and promoting wider AI application across different sectors, including finance, healthcare, legal services, construction, transport, social welfare and tourism, while strengthening AI risk governance. Hong Kong has a highly internationalised financial and professional services system, diverse commercial application scenarios and a well-established intellectual property protection regime, providing favourable conditions for the development and commercialisation of AI applications. The next important task for Hong Kong's I&T development is therefore to translate its research capabilities into practical applications and, in turn, develop sustainable business models and industries from these applications.

The NM provides important development space for Hong Kong to advance the industrialisation of I&T. Last year's *Policy Address* focused on accelerating the NM's transition from a "planning blueprint" to a "construction blueprint" through governance and institutional innovation. This year's policy initiatives further bring together university towns, I&T parks, industry development, talent pooling and urban development. The Government will develop three university towns in San Tin, Hung Shui Kiu and Ta Kwu Ling, planned around "One Town, Five Elements" — education, technology, industry, talent and urban development. It will also advance projects including the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone, San Tin Technopole, Hung Shui Kiu Industry Park and Sandy Ridge Data Facility Cluster. At the same time, the Government will attract enterprises and long-term capital to participate in the development of the NM through measures including dedicated preferential policy packages, tax concessions and financing participation by financial institutions.

Notably, the Five-Year Plan sets the production of 900 hectares of "spade-ready sites" in the NM from 2026-27 to 2030-31 as a binding indicator, substantially higher than the approximately 120 hectares produced over the preceding five years. This not only reflects an acceleration in NM development, but also indicates that land development in the NM will be more closely aligned with the needs of industry, R&D, education and talent development. If Hong Kong can further facilitate the transformation of R&D outcomes and attract enterprises, capital and talent to cluster in the NM, its significance will extend beyond increasing land and housing supply, providing greater development space for Hong Kong's industrial development and economic transformation.

III. Talent and Industry Synergy: Strengthening Talent Attraction, Development and Industry Alignment

Talent provides a common foundation for the development of finance, I&T and emerging industries. Over the past few years, Hong Kong has actively introduced various talent admission schemes, with the initial policy focus placed more heavily on expanding talent supply. As the inflow of talent increases, the next stage will require greater attention to matching talent with industry needs and enabling incoming talent to pursue long-term development in Hong Kong. The Five-Year Plan identifies the development of an International Hub for High-calibre Talent as an important direction for Hong Kong over the next five years, while this year's *Policy Address* further emphasises the integrated development of education, technology and talent. This reflects a stronger emphasis on talent nurturing and retention, as well as better alignment between talent policies and industry development needs, alongside continued efforts to attract talent.

The "Study in Hong Kong" brand is one area worth highlighting. The Government will deepen the development of Hong Kong as an international education hub, drive the "Hong Kong: Your World-class Campus" international promotion, and extend for two years the pilot arrangement to include graduates from the Greater Bay Area campuses of Hong Kong universities under the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates. The Five-Year Plan also sets a target to increase the number of non-local students enrolled in full-time locally accredited post-secondary education programmes in Hong Kong from 79,800 in the 2024/25 academic year to 100,000 in 2029/30. This will help Hong Kong further leverage the role of higher education in nurturing and pooling talent, building a more stable talent pool.

At the same time, talent policies are becoming more targeted towards the needs of emerging industries. The *Policy Address* proposes considering the addition of more talent categories relating to AI application to the Talent List and relaxing extension-of-stay requirements under the Top Talent Pass Scheme for certain technology start-up entrepreneurs. The significance of these measures lies in a growing emphasis not only on the size of the talent pool but also its composition. The development of industries such as AI, life and health technology, new industrialisation and fintech requires not simply a larger workforce, but talent with relevant technological, research, management and international market experience.

From a longer-term perspective, talent and industry policies need to reinforce each other. Competitive

industries and enterprises provide talent with long-term career development opportunities, while an adequate and diverse talent pool is also an important consideration for business investment and industry clustering. By considering the talent nurturing functions of universities, research institutions, innovation platforms and enterprises alongside the development of the NM University Town and industries, this year's policy initiatives can help Hong Kong further strengthen talent nurturing and retention while continuing to attract talent, creating more favourable conditions for talent to pursue long-term development in the city.

IV. Connecting with the Mainland and the World: Deepening Regional Co-operation and Expanding International Market Opportunities

As a highly externally oriented economy, Hong Kong's growth opportunities are not confined to its domestic market. As the Mainland economy and the international competitiveness of Mainland enterprises continue to grow, while global industrial and trade patterns undergo restructuring, Hong Kong's two-way role in connecting the Mainland with international markets is becoming increasingly important. Both the Five-Year Plan and this year's *Policy Address* attach importance to better integrating into and serving the overall national development, with policy initiatives placing greater emphasis on strengthening Hong Kong's connections with both the Mainland and the world.

In terms of connections with the Mainland, GBA co-operation is deepening from infrastructure connectivity towards the alignment of rules and mechanisms and greater industrial collaboration. This year's *Policy Address* proposes establishing a task force to accelerate the alignment of rules and mechanisms among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, co-ordinating the work of relevant bureaux in advancing such alignment. Co-operation will also be deepened in areas including finance, new industrialisation, maritime services, professional services and higher education. This means that, alongside "hard connectivity" in areas such as transport, "soft connectivity" at the institutional and market levels is becoming increasingly important to GBA integration. For Hong Kong, smoother factor flows and closer institutional alignment will help businesses combine Hong Kong's internationalised service capabilities with the GBA's industrial chains, technological strengths and market scale, expanding the hinterland for Hong Kong's economic development.

In terms of connections with the rest of the world, Hong Kong will continue to play its role in connecting the Mainland with global markets, while further strengthening support for Mainland enterprises expanding overseas. The *Policy Address* will deepen the work of the GoGlobal Task Force, leveraging Hong Kong's strengths in finance, legal, accounting, risk management and other professional services to provide more comprehensive support for enterprises pursuing international expansion. At the same time, Hong Kong will continue to expand its international economic and trade network and deepen its participation in high-quality co-operation under the Belt and Road Initiative, helping Hong Kong enterprises participate in projects in Belt and Road countries and regions, including through the launch of the Green Technology Bridgehead Programme to promote Hong Kong's green technologies and related professional services in overseas markets.

The deepening of this two-way role reflects Hong Kong's expanding function in the country's high-level opening up. On the one hand, Hong Kong can bring global capital, technology, talent and professional services into national development. On the other hand, it can help Mainland enterprises, capital, technology and standards access international markets. Hong Kong's future development opportunities will therefore not only come from the local market, but will also depend on further leveraging its institutional, financial and international network advantages to enhance its value as a platform connecting the Mainland with global markets.

Disclaimer & Important Notes

This document is published by Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited ("BOCHK") and is for reference only.

The content contained in this document has not been reviewed by the Securities and Futures Commission of Hong Kong.

This document is not intended for distribution to, or use by, any person or entity in any jurisdiction or country where such distribution would be contrary to any laws or regulations.

This document is for reference only. It does not constitute, nor is it intended to be, nor should it be construed as investment recommendation or professional advice, or offer, solicitation, recommendation, comment or guarantee to the purchase or sale, subscription or transaction of any investment products or services stated herein. You should not make any investment decision based upon the information provided in this document.

The information provided is based on sources which BOCHK believes to be reliable but has not been independently verified. Therefore, BOCHK does not make any representation, warranty or undertaking as to the accuracy, completeness or correctness of the information or opinions provided in this document. The forecasts and opinions contained in this document are only provided as general market commentaries and are not independent investment research reports and are not to provide any investment advice or return guarantee and should not be relied upon as such. All views, forecasts and estimates are judgements of the analysts made before the publication date, and are subject to change without further notice. No liability or responsibility is accepted by BOCHK and related information providers in relation to the use of or reliance on any such information, projections and/or opinions whatsoever contained in this document. Investors must make their own assessment of the relevance, accuracy and adequacy of the information, projections and/or opinions contained in this document and make such independent investigations as they may consider necessary or appropriate for the purpose of such assessment.

The securities, commodities, foreign exchanges, derivatives or investments referred to in this document may not be suitable for all investors. No consideration has been given to any particular investment objective or experience, financial situation or other needs of any recipient. Accordingly, no representation or recommendation is made and no liability is accepted with regards to the suitability or appropriateness of any of the securities and/or investments referred to herein for any particular person's circumstances. Investors should understand the nature and risks of the relevant product and make investment decision(s) based on his/her own financial situation, investment objectives and experiences, willingness and ability to bear risks and specific needs and if necessary, should seek independent professional advice before making any investment decision(s). This document is not intended to provide any professional advice and should not be relied upon as such.

BOCHK is a subsidiary of Bank of China Limited. Bank of China Limited, its subsidiaries and/or their officers, directors and employees may have positions in and may trade for their own account in all or any of the securities, commodities, foreign exchanges, derivatives or investments mentioned in this document. Bank of China Limited or its subsidiaries may have provided investment services (whether investment banking or non investment banking related), may have underwritten, or may have acted as market makers in relation to these securities, commodities, foreign exchanges, derivatives or investments. Commission or other fees may be earned by Bank of China Limited or its subsidiaries in respect of the services provided by them relating to these securities, commodities, foreign exchanges, derivatives or other investments.

No part of this document may be edited, reproduced, extracted, transferred or transmitted to the public or any unapproved person in any form or by any means (including electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), or stored in a retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the BOCHK.

"Hong Kong Financial Research Institute of Bank of China"

"Hong Kong Financial Research Institute of Bank of China"("the Institute") is the core research and strategic planning centre within the Bank of China (Hong Kong) Group. Rooted in Hong Kong, setting our sights on the Greater Bay Area, Southeast Asia, Asia-Pacific and the world, the Institute focuses on macro-economics and policies, financial markets, RMB internationalization and digital currencies, financial sector reforms and innovation, green and sustainable finance development. The Institute, as the knowledge centre of BOC, combines original macro, meso and micro researches with real-world practices to provide unique insights and advices to the community. With the core mission of serving the country and Hong Kong, the Institute advises the government agencies, and has built extensive collaborations and joint research with prestigious universities, think tanks and industry leaders in Hong Kong and Mainland China. The Institute has 60 professional researchers and produces close to 1,000 internal and external research papers annually.

Author:

Wilson Chong: Senior Economist at Hong Kong Financial Research Institute of Bank of China. His main research areas focus on Hong Kong's economy and development policy.

If you have any suggestions or want to publish your research papers in this product, please contact us by espadmin@bochk.com or directly contact the author(s).

Please follow BOCHK on WeChat for the latest economic and financial markets analyses

©Copyright. Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited. All rights reserved.

主要經濟指標(Key Economic Indicators)

一、本地生產總值 GDP	2023	2024	2025	2026/Q2
總量(億港元) GDP(HKD 100million)	29,812	31,865	33,298	8,424
同比增長率(%) YoY change(%)	3.2	2.6	3.6	4.3
二、對外商品貿易 External merchandize trade			**2026/8**	**2026/1-8**
外貿總值(億港元) Total trade(HKD 100million)				
總出口 Total exports	45,317	41,774	6,679	47,546
總進口 Total imports	49,275	46,450	7,391	51,258
貿易差額 Trade balance	-3,958	-4,676	-712	-3,712
年增長率(%) YoY Growth(%)				
總出口 Total exports	-8.6	-7.8	53.0	42.5
總進口 Total imports	-7.2	-5.7	60.0	43.2
三、消費物價 Consumer Price				
綜合消費物價升幅(%) Change in Composite CPI(%)	1.9	2.1	1.9	1.7
四、零售市場 Retail market				
零售額同比升幅(%) Change in value of total sales YoY(%)	-0.9	16.2	5.6	8.5
五、訪港遊客 Visitors				
總人數(萬人次) Total arrivals(10 thousands)	60.5	3,400.0	545.6	3667.3
年升幅(%) YoY change(%)	561.5	5,523.8	5.9	10.5
六、勞動就業 Employment			**2026/5-2026/7**	**2026/6-2026/8**
失業人數(萬人) No. of unemployed(10 thousands)	16.3	11.3	14.6	15.4
失業率(%) Unemployment rate(%)	4.3	2.9	3.7	3.8
就業不足率(%) Underemployment rate(%)	2.3	1.1	1.7	1.9
七、住宅買賣 Domestic property sales and price index			**2026/7**	**2026/8**
合約宗數(宗) No. of agreements	45,050	43,002	4,462	4,019
住宅售價指數(1999=100) Domestic price index	369.7	337.4	320.3	320.5
八、金融市場 Financial market			**2026/8**	**2026/9**
港幣匯價(US$100=HK$)期末值 HKD exchange rate (US$100 = HK$), end of period	780.8	781.1	783.9	784.7
銀行體系收市總結餘(億港元)期末值 Closing aggregate balance(HKD 100million), end of period	962.5	449.5	541.9	541.1
銀行總存款升幅(%) Change in total deposits(%)	1.7	5.1	7.3	-
銀行總貸款升幅(%) Change in total loans & advances(%)	-3.0	-3.6	7.0	-
最優惠貸款利率(%)期末值 Best lending rate (%), end of period	5.6250	5.8750	5.0000	5.0000
恒生指數 Hang Seng Index	19,781	17,047	25,567	24,613